JULY 1961

Commentary

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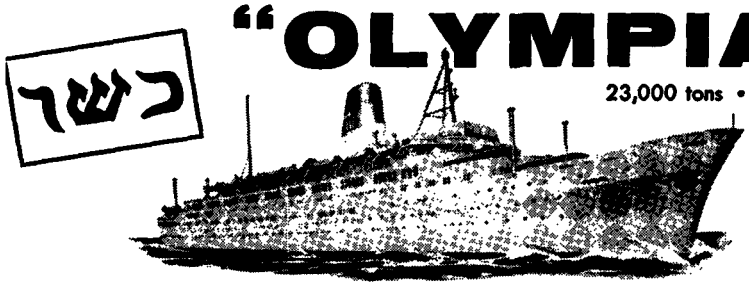

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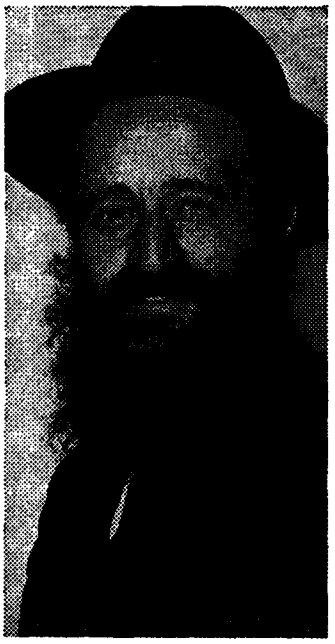

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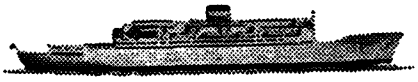

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FEDERAL AID TO PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

A Debate

The issue of federal aid to parochial schools is often approached largely in terms of whether such aid is compatible with the separation between church and state. Yet many other questions of social policy are involved here as well, not the least of which is the effect federal aid could have on American voluntarism in general. We have therefore invited two writers who agree in their estimate of the enormous importance of voluntarism in American life, but who take radically opposing views of how federal aid to private schools would affect it, to argue their cases for the readers of COMMENTARY.

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG, *whose article "Affluence, Galbraith, the Democrats" (September 1960) provoked wide discussion, teaches sociology at New York University and the New School for Social Research. He is the author (with Ralph Ross) of* The Fabric of Society *and* Education as an Industry. OSCAR HANDLIN, *a veteran contributor to* COMMENTARY, *is professor of history at Harvard and director of the Center for the Study of the History of Liberty in America. His works include* The Uprooted, Chance or Destiny: Turning Points in American History, *and* Race and Nationality in American Life.

Ernest van den Haag: In one form or another, we all support public education with our taxes. If we have no offspring, we are supposed to benefit nonetheless: other people's children might be more of a nuisance if not kept in school; and there is always the chance that they might learn something useful to us there. (A tenuous justification, but let it go.) Those of us, however, who send our children to private schools pay for the public school they do not use and also for their private school. Is that fair?

Citizens often are taxed for services they spurn: pacifists must pay taxes to support armies they detest, criminals pay to support the police they would rather do without; we are taxed for a bridge even though we prefer to sail across in our own boat. Yet often we can avoid burdening those who do not use the service offered: some taxes are levied only on users or beneficiaries—for instance, amusement or sewer taxes, and various tolls and fees. It would be technically possible to reimburse, or not to tax for the support of public schools, those who prefer private ones; or, we could subsidize private schools at the rate public schools are subsidized—the effect would be almost the same as that of reimbursement. Many other techniques are available to help private education—or those who now shoulder its burden without being relieved of the financial burden of public education. Obviously the issue is not whether we can, but whether we should and do want to help—whether aid to private education is in the public interest, or, at least, not contrary to it.

Taxpayers who send their children to private schools have long been grumbling under their double load. Their dissatisfaction became acute when the Kennedy administration asked Congress to subsidize public education with federal funds, without simultaneously granting a subsidy to private education. This makes the unre-

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quited tax burden of the parents of private school children still heavier—and it aggravates them. The Roman Catholic church, which runs the biggest and fastest-growing private school system in the country, has objected vigorously. Most other religious denominations would benefit less from a subsidy; they don't support many private schools, perhaps because they are reasonably satisfied with the public schools which, after all, reflect a Protestant ethos, if a little more secularized and Americanized than Protestantism in general. There is no gainsaying the ideologically and historically Protestant background of public education. In turn, the Protestant ethos (including the theistic and enlightenment components and the stress on the individual's direct relation to scripture) is shared widely within the Jewish community. Many Jews also favor public schools because separate education of religious groups unavoidably awakens memories of the ghetto. Thus, on the whole, religious non-Catholics have championed the administration's stand. So have many well-meaning people who wish to continue the tradition barring the expenditure of public funds for private schools; some because they favor public schooling, and others because most of the private schools that would benefit from a subsidy would be denominational and the greatest proportion Roman Catholic.

If we turn from motivation to argument, two kinds of questions are raised about public subsidies for private schools: socio-political and moral ones concerned with the development of our culture and the effects subsidies to private and, particularly, denominational education may have; and ones about the constitutionality of a subsidy. Let us first separate the social issue (is it desirable?) from its legal integument (will the courts allow it?).

"CONGRESS SHALL MAKE no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The intent of this part of the First Amendment to the Constitution is to guarantee "the free exercise" of religion and conscience by barring "establishment," the legal alliance of organized religion—of churches—with public authority. Such an alliance might make religion a public rather than a private matter and ultimately restrict freedom of conscience.

The Constitution says nothing about education. When the First Amendment was passed, no public school system existed. (Massachusetts had barely enacted a law making the maintenance of schools compulsory for localities—but attendance was not.) The Constitutional Fathers were not confronted with our problem: shall we support public education only, or private education also? shall we regard church-controlled private schools as mainly educational, or as essentially religious institutions? We can only guess how the Constitutional Convention would have solved these problems. The Supreme Court is in charge of such guessing, but so far it has not been confronted with the issue, so that we can only guess how it would guess.

To be sure, the courts have found unconstitutional the use of public funds for bus transportation of parochial school children and for tuition payments to specific denominational schools. Even these tangential issues remain muddled, though. And, above all, the real question has never been asked: does the Constitution bar a subsidy that would be equally available to private schools of all denominations, as well as to non-denominational and non-religious private schools? Clearly, such a subsidy need not "bring about the legal [*sic*] ascendancy of one sect over another," which Jefferson feared, or the ascendancy of religion in general. There is a world of difference between a subsidy which reduces and one which increases choice, between one available only to religious private schools (or worse, those of a particular denomination) and one equally available to secular ones. So far, the cases submitted to the courts have

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been of the former kind. No one has tested either whether a limited subsidy would be constitutional—e.g. a subsidy exclusively for science and language teaching in all private schools—if none of the money or service goes into fields affected by religious teaching. Bus transportation and tuition payments benefit religious as well as other instruction. A limited subsidy would not.

It is not necessary actually to subsidize private schools. The subsidy could be paid to the students (directly or by tax reimbursement) or, as part of their tuition, to the school in which they enroll.* The Veterans Administration subsidized veterans directly for their living expenses and paid all their tuition to the schools they attended, whether religious or secular, private or public. There was no constitutional challenge. New York State has just started to subsidize all college students regardless of whether they enroll in secular, religious, private, or public institutions. If all accredited private schools are included, rather than just those of a particular church, and if students (or parents) are free to choose, a subsidy can hardly be less constitutional for primary and secondary than for higher education.

There does not seem to be a constitutional bar, then, against subsidizing private schools in some form if the criterion for the subsidy is purely educational and does not favor religious over non-religious schools, or a particular denomination, and if enrollment in public schools remains available without disadvantage.† (Else choice may be restricted rather than enlarged.) But if the Supreme Court were to create such a bar tomorrow, it should not be regarded as unsurmountable. In *Plessy vs. Ferguson,* the Supreme Court declared that "separate but equal" is equal (enough to be constitutional). Fifty-eight years later, in *Brown vs. Bd. of Education,* the Court found that "separate but equal" is "inherently unequal" and can never be constitutional. In recent times, the Court has often taken much less to change its mind. Thus, should the Supreme Court find all subsidies to private schools unconstitutional—a decision that I would think unjust as well as unlikely—its judgment might delay rather than prevent a subsidy. Let us turn, then, to the decisive social reasons advanced for and against federal aid to private schools.

THE USE OF public funds for private schools may be undesirable though it be constitutional. Whether it is undesirable does not altogether depend on whether private education is. The justification of support must be separated here from the justification of the thing supported.

If we believe private schooling to be altogether contrary to the public interest, we might prohibit it, or make enrollment financially burdensome. However, if we feel that private schools, though not serving the public interest as well as public ones, are still not contrary to it, we might leave the choice to parents on more equal terms than are now offered. One may disapprove of the choice of parents who send their children to private schools, and yet grant their right to make such a choice without suffering all the financial disadvantages they now suffer. The public interest in public education would have to be weighed against the public interest in equity and free parental choice. And the latter may come to weigh more heavily in the balance than it does now.

Thus, even if private schools be undesirable, there may be philosophical reasons for subsidizing them or reimbursing par-

* Since I favor more strenuous competition between public and private schools, and more freedom of choice for parents, I should be inclined not to subsidize private any less than public schools: the amount it now costs to keep children in public schools would be paid out to any school —public or private—in which parents enroll them provided that scholastic standards are met. But this, though desirable, is not logically implied in discussing a partial federal subsidy, and it calls for more argument than can be presented here.

† I forgo discussing minor dodges which I think are unnecessary, such as leasing buildings or services to private schools.

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ents. However, there are more conclusive practical reasons for doing so. Private schools are obviously here to stay, even without public subsidy or tax relief. Now, if we grant that schools need a federal subsidy,* then certainly private and public schools stand in equal need: most private schools have even less ample financial resources than public schools and as many financial burdens; their pupils require the educational benefits the federal subsidy is designed to yield no less than public school pupils. Should they be punished for what opponents of private education feel is the obdurate wrong-headedness of their parents? Grown-ups, who presumably make their own choices, are subsidized whether they attend private religious colleges or not.† Why then are children—who do not make their own choice—to be deprived? One might oppose the creation of private schools on principle, yet, once they have been created, help the children in them.

To be sure, if private schools are an evil, subsidizing them—though mitigating the evil by improving education for the children already attending—may also encourage it by encouraging enrollments. This dilemma is not unusual, though. For example, measures to subsidize illegitimate children raise analogous questions. We may be opposed to child-bearing outside the public institution of marriage; but once children are conceived under private auspices, we subsidize mothers for the sake of their children who cannot be blamed for the parental carelessness which we deplore. Of course, by relieving present and future unmarried mothers of some of their financial burden, the subsidy encourages illegitimacy in some measure. (The case of prolific parents of families already on relief is similar.) However, most of us feel that the advantages arising to the children and thus to society far outweigh the incidental encouragement of the parental behavior we would prefer to discourage.

Willingness to subsidize unmarried mothers for the sake of their children can be reconciled with unwillingness to subsidize private schools (or religious parents) for the sake of their children only if we believe at least one of the following: (1) The motives causing some parents to prefer private schools are worse than those that cause some to have illegitimate children; the former, therefore, should be punitively deprived—even though the children bear the burden of the deprivation; (2) Withholding a subsidy would be a more effective deterrent in one case than in the other; (3) The social evils of private education are worse than those of illegitimacy.

As to the first, I do not think that even the most adamant opponents of private schools seriously feel that it is better to subsidize illegitimate than private school children and thus to jeopardize the latter for the sake of some future social advantage. As to the second, financial pressure is no more likely to overcome social or religious than to overcome sexual deviation** (the growth of unsubsidized private schools demonstrates as much). And as to the third, there is no evidence for the contention that the social evils of private education are worse than those of illegitimacy; but even if it be true, would not a subsidy help to mitigate the evil? Withholding it surely does not.

I BELIEVE I HAVE shown that the case for subsidies is compelling even if one disapproves of private education. But what reasons are there to disapprove of it?

We have a tradition of public education; obviously this *per se* is no reason for not changing, but it has emotional appeal —though we had traditions of private be-

---

* I am unconvinced of this need, but here I am concerned only with the distribution of the subsidy between private and public schools.

† The Veterans Administration and New York State pay regardless of whether the college attended is private or public, religious or secular.

** That tolerance of sexual deviation has increased more than tolerance of educational deviation suggests a displacement of secularized religious zeal.

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fore we had public education. Tradition is a grab bag. Historically we did not favor the vote for women until we introduced it. We have been for and against witch-hunting, slavery, prohibition, segregation, divorce, etc. What we have mostly favored traditionally is change, unless, that is, we favored no change (which has happened less often). History cannot tell us whether we should subsidize private—or for that matter public—education. It points, as usual, in all directions, and mainly to the past.

Sometimes it is argued that a federal subsidy to private schools would lead to federal control. Certainly an eligibility standard would be required, and we would have to find out whether it is being met. But this is the case where accreditation is concerned too. Control could be vested in local authorities as it is now. I should welcome standards and controls more demanding and more relevant to educational purposes than those now established for accreditation—e.g., minimal curricula and the requirement that a certain percentage of students pass certain tests as a condition for continued subsidization. These things are needed, but not for the sake of the subsidy: though I prefer not to, one could leave them to local and even private authorities. On the other hand, government power to regulate education does not depend on subsidies, as the courts are busily showing.

Private education is often thought undemocratic. However, in the ordinary sense of the word, there is nothing undemocratic about private, or democratic about public, schools. England—a democracy—has many private schools; the Soviet Union—a dictatorship—has public education exclusively. It is likely that the word "democratic" here is misused to mean "egalitarian" and perhaps also "culturally homogeneous" and "socially cohesive." So interpreted, the issue raises genuinely important questions: how desirable are egalitarianism and homogeneity *per se*? And how necessary for the cohesion of our society (which is certainly desirable)? How necessary is public education to achieve any or all of these, and how detrimental is private education? Even a treatise could not answer these questions fully. I must confine myself to a few points.

Egalitarianism, though looming rather large in the minds of many, is of little relevance here: a subsidy to private schools is not likely to increase or spread whatever class distinctions private schooling now involves. It may diminish class distinctions by permitting poorer children to attend schools which now only the richer ones can afford.

Cultural differentiation independent of class—or conversely, the desirability of cultural homogeneity through public schooling—is more important in this context. And it must be conceded that private schools contribute to cultural heterogeneity; at least that often is their purpose. I doubt that a subsidy would materially affect this. Yet, it would give moral approval—at least end opposition—to it. This seems to be the issue. But, even if the case for cultural homogeneity were quite appealing, should we use financial pressure—be it effective or not—to achieve it? Permitting or persuading is one thing, but attempting to coerce people into a public school when they would prefer private ones is quite another matter. But let that go. Grant, too, that public education helped in bringing American culture and society to their present development. (Other possibilities existed to be sure; the Swiss fared pretty well without using a melting pot.) Do we still need that emphasis on cultural homogeneity and these means? Would the generation or perpetuation of some cultural heterogeneity be bad now?

Surely the situation has changed. The very people who oppose help to private schools make the country ring with their complaints about "conformity." Aren't public schools fostering it and private schools—if only by fostering conformity to different ideas—loosening it? Shouldn't

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we help them because they are different? And if they weren't, what would be the basis for objection?

The public school played a major, though controversial, role in the acculturation of great waves of immigrants. These waves have passed. (The Puerto Ricans are a minor ripple.) Moreover, private schools as they have developed would not do badly in competing with public ones in this respect today. The danger of insufficient "Americanization" through schooling that stresses "un-American" or "non-American" traditions is hardly serious any more. The secular forces of cohesion in the United States are overwhelming. It seems to me that conservation and support of what diversity of cultural tradition remains is likely now, and ultimately, to strengthen them more than insistence on further homogenization. If there is a weak spot in our cohesion, it is not our heterogeneity but our cultural homogeneity; not our religious differences, but the insufficiently transcendent nature of our cohesion, which is influenced by the American standard of living as much as by the idea of America. This is perhaps more likely to be remedied by private than by public schools.

A number of positive things could be said for private schools. Their very independence permits them to be more various in their methods, less uniform in their curricula, more adaptable to the needs of minorities, and more experimental than public schools can afford to be. And taxpayers will continue to profit financially from the existence of private schools: whatever subsidy is granted them is not going to cover costs—nor do proponents demand this. I have neglected these and other arguments in favor of private schools because I thought it quite enough to show that there is no less a reason to help them than to help public schools. To do this, it is enough to show that objections to them, and objections to subsidizing them, cannot be sustained. This I believe I have done.

* * *

Oscar Handlin: As this essay is being written, it seems probable that Congress will sustain the President and will refuse to accede to the demand that any share of federal aid to education go to parochial schools. The issue will not then be settled, however. It is likely to be postponed and to rise again and again in the next few years.

The unequivocal ultimatum earlier this year by the Catholic bishops that they would oppose any bill that did not provide some assistance to parochial schools caused widespread uneasiness among many Americans. This ultimatum raised troubling questions about the obligations of the individual to the community, about the pressures of organized political power, and about the constitutional relations of church and state in the United States. Above all, however, the whole issue of federal aid compels us to re-examine the place alloted to voluntary activities in a free society. That is the core of the matter.

A good deal of confusion has been generated by the argument that the failure to give public funds to Catholic schools unjustly subjects Catholics to a form of double taxation. These parents, it is claimed, pay levies to the government to support institutions they do not use and also pay tuition to those their children actually attend. Father John Courtney Murray has given eloquent expression to this contention: "The canons of distributive justice ought to control the action of government in allocating funds that it coercively collects from all people. . . . The solution . . . reached in the 19th century reveals injustice and the legal statutes that

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establish the injustice are an abuse of power."

It is worth noting that this was not the point of view of Catholics in 19th-century America, when the claimants upon the governmental purse were Protestant; nor is it a position that is widely recognized in countries where Catholics are a majority or hold political control. It seems rather to be the product of the particular pressures of the present situation.

But were Father Murray's argument valid, it might well override all other considerations. Yet nothing in the American experience sustains the accusation of injustice. The community has always assumed the responsibility for performing certain functions of general utility, which it supports with income raised by taxation. In this manner, schools, hospitals, and libraries are maintained because they serve the welfare of the whole community, not because they serve those who pay the costs. There are individuals and groups who prefer to use private libraries or to buy their own books, or who elect to enter private hospitals, or who wish to send their children to private schools or colleges. In so doing, they satisfy their own desires or the dictates of their own consciences—and at their own expense. Yet that does not acquit them of their obligation to the community. Nor can they call, in the name of justice, for a share of the financial resources that the government acquires to perform its own functions in the same spheres.

The freedom of the individual to choose the school or hospital of his own preference is conditioned upon the acceptance of his obligations to the whole community. Without this balance our society would confront equally undesirable alternatives. Either each man would be left to find what services he himself could afford, with the poor dependent upon some form of charity; or the state would assume or delegate complete control of any or all services.

The development of the school system, as of similar institutions, has enabled Americans to escape the necessity of accepting either alternative. Loose pluralistic forms have permitted the spread both of public, governmentally-operated services and, in the same areas, of private, voluntary ones. This balance has been an important element in the maintenance of American liberty.

IT DOES NOT FOLLOW, however, that the public school system of the past hundred and twenty-five years is sacrosanct. This system has not always been a part of our life, but arose in response to historic needs; conceivably, if it outgrew those needs, the people could alter or abolish it. But any change that is made ought to be detemined not by the interests of a single group, but on the basis of larger criteria —political expediency, constitutionality, and the effects of the change upon freedom.

In my opinion, federal aid to parochial schools would be most inexpedient politically. Historians of the future will, I suspect, divide the last fifty years into two periods. From 1910 to 1940 there was a steady, tragic rise in intergroup hostility, in religious prejudice, and in overt conflict. It was unthinkable in 1928 that a Catholic should be chosen President; and it remained unthinkable during the next three elections. During the two decades since 1940, the war and the threat of totalitarianism have rapidly eased these tensions; and the election of 1960 revealed that a majority of non-Catholic Americans no longer feared Catholicism as a monolithic force alien to the nation's traditional values. It would be heartbreaking if those gains were in the least to be diminished.

Twice President Kennedy has asked why the question of aiding parochial schools should have been raised this year; it was not raised on previous occasions when Congress considered federal aid to education. The President's query echoes in the minds of many Americans. Were Catholics now to constitute a political bloc

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which made aid to parochial schools a condition for any federal legislation in the area of education, intergroup relations would certainly suffer.

Considerations of constitutionality are serious, but less decisive. For a century and a half the direction of American constitutional law has been to exclude the government ever more sharply from areas in which faith was involved. That trend could of course be reversed, but such a reversal ought not to be effected without a clear recognition of the consequences.

The framers of the Virginia statute on religious liberty and of the First Amendment to the federal Constitution were groping toward a novel conception of man's relation to God—as an altogether voluntary matter with which the polity ought not to interfere. But since they could not anticipate all the implications of this idea, there was no clean sweep of inherited practices. Well into the 19th century vestiges of establishment persisted, sometimes in a modified form, and a few persist even to this day—for example, the chaplains in the armed services and in Congress, the support of Christian missions on Indian reservations, and state blue-laws.

Nevertheless, the main line of development in American constitutional law has moved toward an ever fuller implementation of the conception of religion as properly free of governmental coercion or support. The courts have held that the First Amendment intended to do more than create conditions of equality among the diverse religious groups of the country: it also intended to separate clearly the affairs of the national government from those of the church. With the extension by the Fourteenth Amendment of that wall of separation to the individual states, any doubts about the exclusion of government from the realm of religion were removed. (If the Sunday laws are still sustained, it is under the subterfuge that the state's police powers permit it to enjoin a day of rest upon all its citizens.)

The consequences of total separation were fortunate. Americans were no less devout than other Western peoples, perhaps more so. But their piety was removed from open or concealed compulsion. James Bryce, noting that half the troubles which vexed the Europe of his day arose "from the rival claims of Church and State," concluded: "This whole vast chapter of debate and strife has remained unopened in the United States. . . . All religious bodies are absolutely equal before the law, and unrecognized by the law, except as voluntary associations of private citizens."

But the Constitution is a living document, subject to amendment, reinterpretation, and evasion. Innovations may be introduced by acts of Congress or by the state legislatures in forms which are not testable by the courts, and even if such innovations were to be tested, the judges might still push the laws in a new direction. Above all, there remains open the possibility of forthright amendment, should enough citizens desire it. If the American people decide that the ideas of James Madison ought no longer to bind them, there are ample means of escape or accommodation. A candid and public discussion of the alternatives, however, would be preferable to the pretense that no alternatives exist.

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION, therefore, is whether the principle of strict separation—which sprang from a concern with liberating the conscience of man from the rule of force—has outlived its utility.

During the first century and a half of American experience, tightly organized homogeneous communities recognized no distinctions between the sword and the altar. The New England meeting house served both for worship and for government. The Virginia vestry and parish were at once political and religious entities. Everywhere but in Rhode Island and Pennsylvania, the churches were established, supported by taxes, and sustained by legal sanctions. Given such integrated

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communal organization, there could be no distinction between public and private in the sense we now know it. Colleges and philanthropic institutions, as well as churches, depended upon government aid and accepted government control.

To endow religious bodies with absolute autonomy under these circumstances was a monumental achievement, matched in few other societies. It was made possible by the slow discovery that governmental means were not the only ones available for social action. By the 1780's Americans had learned to work together in voluntary associations which depended not upon coercion but upon the loyalty and willingness of their members to make personal sacrifices in order to attain common goals. That experience was more weighty in establishing religious liberty than formal constitutional guarantees. The churches discovered empirically that the voluntary adhesion of their members was a greater source of strength than the props available from the state. Since the 18th century, Americans have preponderantly believed that the instruments of coercion with which government was armed were inappropriate in matters of the spirit; and as a religious people, they were persuaded that religion could best thrive free of such interference.

In the 19th century, by a tortuous course (the details of which are not yet clear), a line was drawn between public and private institutions, religious and others. At the opening of the century, churches—like colleges, academies, hospitals, and libraries—though controlled by their own governing boards, still had ties to the state from which they accepted privileges. Gradually the ties loosened and the privileges disappeared. For the price of autonomy was to surrender the claim for aid and the resolve to rely completely upon independent resources. The only surviving privilege is the essentially negative one of tax exemption, which can be bestowed without selection or preference.

Now and again, some private organizations have been tempted by easy access to the public treasury. More generally, they have preferred to allow the government to expend its funds through its own agencies, even when these agencies offered competition to the private ones. Yet the growth of state universities, public schools, and municipal hospitals did not damage private institutions. Indeed, one of the great strengths of the American republic has been the latitude of choice it offered individuals: not everything that had to be done, had to be done through the state. The capacity to choose has been an important element in keeping state power within manageable limits and in allowing diverse groups to seek their own ends in their own ways.

In a period when the growing power of government tends to subdue differences and to subject the individual to total dependence upon the state, it is more important than ever to preserve freedom of action. And nowhere is this principle more important than in education. The issue was fought out over a century ago in New York City when Archbishop Hughes objected to the markedly Protestant character of the society which operated the public schools. The only feasible arrangement was to divorce public education from religious control entirely and to expend all state funds through state institutions, while each sect remained free to conduct its own system at its own expense.

Almost forty years ago that arrangement was implicitly confirmed by the Supreme Court in the case of *Pierce vs. the Society of Sisters,* which held that the state did not possess a monopoly over the process of education and that particular groups could organize toward their own ends as they wished.

This decision (and similar ones) rested upon two crucial premises. First, the right to conduct schools was not considered to inhere in the particular merit of a private organization such as the Society of Sisters; the Court did not pass upon that ques-

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tion. The right emanated from the parents and the pupils, who were held free to choose whatever form of training they considered appropriate, subject only to certain general regulations of health and safety. What these parents could do was precedent for any other group; the status of all private schools, under whatever auspices, thus became identical.

Furthermore, the unexpressed but assumed premise of the decision was that the private school had no financial ties to the state. The rights of the Society of Sisters were a condition of the organization's willingness to assume the burden of maintaining its own institution.

ANY GRANT OF public aid, in any form whatever, diminishes the private voluntary character of the recipient. It is a well-founded principle, and one that has great merit, that the bestowal of a public privilege brings with it public responsibilities, which can only be defined by governmental authority. This has been held true of museums, housing projects, and trade unions; it would certainly be held true of schools or even churches. It is of the essence of the relationship thus created that the grant establishes the subordination of the receiver to the donor.

Senator Joseph Clark of Pennsylvania, for example, has defended aid to the parochial schools on the grounds that the government is responsible for assuring adequate schooling for all children. But if this is so, who is to set the standards of adequacy? There can only be one answer—the government. The states themselves have already gone far, too far, in establishing requisites of instruction; and the resultant damage has only been mitigated by inefficiencies in enforcement. It would be hazardous indeed to establish a basis upon which our government could begin to define, as totalitarian regimes do, what is true, good, and useful.

This danger is remote, but it is nonetheless genuine. If the federal treasury is opened to religious schools, it must be opened to private secular schools as well. Even if the resources of the government were limitless, some standard of selection would have to be employed and, since that could not rest upon the status of the potential recipients, it could only involve a judgment of what constituted adequate schooling.

We are all too ready to close our eyes to the potential danger here because the very voluntarism which government aid threatens has thus far shielded us from it. We can now operate under the convenient fiction that every bachelor's degree and every diploma is equal in value, although in actuality there are vast disparities among the thousands of diverse schools and colleges in the country. We could not sustain that useful tolerance once the question of government aid were injected. Decisions would then be necessary as to whether to spread available funds thin among all applicants, to limit them to the best, or to set minimum standards of adequacy. Any choice would call for political judgments about the goals and methods of education and would put pressure on all institutions to conform. It would make necessary unwelcome comparisons among various types of schools and teachers—unwelcome because they would depend upon the application of uniform criteria which are not universally accepted. Finally, public aid would demand the acceptance of governmentally-defined codes of internal organization and behavior. Just as such aid deprives the trade union and the housing project of the freedom to discriminate among applicants and employees, so it would limit the right of the school to set its own admissions policy and to hire its own teachers.

The alternative is far more safe and fully as feasible—to continue to depend upon the loyalty and devotion of those who have thus far been willing to sustain the private and parochial schools of the country voluntarily. The amount the Catholic bishops have requested to meet

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their capital needs is not out of line with that recently raised by the Ivy League colleges, and the number of potential contributors is far larger. A historian who has studied the 19th-century immigration to the United States is again and again impressed by the ability of humble men of low earning power to dedicate themselves to building institutions in which they really believed. The Irish and Italian and Polish laborers, who gave gladly of the little they had, contributed to an impressive achievement, and in doing so, also expressed their identification with the Church in a totally meaningful way. Is it too much to expect that their affluent grandchildren could do the same and achieve spiritual gains in the process?

Above all, religion in the United States has remained most faithful to its own nature and purpose when it refused to employ the instruments of the government. It has best been able to dedicate itself to the salvation of the individual when it has abjured that power which is the essence of the state. Armies, police, and tax collectors diminish rather than extend the authority of religion, for religion grows only by conversion, by the inner dedication of men to it. Thus religion would be making a poor bargain indeed to pay for some new buildings with the loss of some of its precious old freedom.

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HUGH NISSENSON

ISRAEL DURING THE TRIAL—A Journal

Jerusalem March 27, 1961

DINNER AT THE Café Vienna on Jaffa Road, an expensive *Yecke* or German restaurant frequented by the well-to-do. Steak, french fries, green peas, and while I'm having my coffee, in walks a bearded old Moroccan beggar with his feet wrapped in rags and a checkered scarf around his head. As is generally the custom in the country, no one remarks or tries to stop him as he goes from one customer to another at the espresso bar, holding out his palm, demanding alms without a word. And everybody gives him something until he reaches a man seated at the far left, broad-shouldered, deeply tanned, wearing a suede jacket and a tyrolean hat:

"What do you want?" he shouts in Hebrew. "Get away from me. I have nothing."

The beggar shuffles off.

"Would you believe it?" my waiter asks me in English. "The one in the hat. I know for a fact. He himself was in a slave labor camp near Lvov for three years."

"What of it?"

He grimaces, screwing up his nose, and sticking out his lower lip.

March 28

THE KIDS HERE now use the name "Eichmann" as a dirty word. The joke going around town is that as a punishment Eichmann will be freed and forced to live in Israel as a new immigrant without *protektzia*—i.e. "pull," having the right connections, knowing the right people, etc. I ask Shlomo R., from whom I am renting a room, if he believes that what the waiter implied was right: if his own suffering imposes a particular standard of behavior, a distinctive expression of compassion from a Jew.

"Yes. . . ."

"Even for an Eichmann? Would you execute him?"

A pause and then he shrugs. He tells me that about two months ago, while serving on *miloim,* or reserve duty in the army, he got into a similar discussion with a new immigrant, a North African Jew, who said that if he had the chance, he'd tear Eichmann apart with his bare hands, bite out his throat, etc., etc.

"Why?" Shlomo asked him. "You haven't suffered from the Nazis. What have you got against Eichmann?"

The other, with a grin: "He didn't finish the job."

"What job? What are you talking about?"

Still grinning: "Killing all the Ashkenazim. . . ."

It was meant as a joke, Shlomo tells me, and yet . . . it's some expression of the trouble here between the Western and Oriental communities. When he pressed the North African for some explanation of his remark, he was told that he didn't like the Ashkenazim ". . . because they're the bosses."

March 29

THE COUNTRY IS getting ready for Passover. In the restuarants they are already serving matzos instead of bread. . . . The Jew pursues justice—a literal translation of a Hebrew saying. Shula, R.'s wife, tells me that she spent yesterday afternoon at a session of a three-day conference on the Bible. The

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conference was divided into two main topics: an investigation of the characteristics of Cyrus, the Babylonian king who permitted the Jews to return from their captivity there and rebuild the Temple (2,500 years ago—the anniversary is being celebrated this year); and a series of talks on the form and substance of the "literature of wisdom" to be found in the Bible—the Book of Proverbs and the like. Ben Gurion led off with a lecture on the personality of the king, and most of the other speakers who followed were also not professional Bible scholars, simply writers, civil servants, accountants, agrarian specialists, etc.—students, says Shula, who, like their audience, simply love the Book and study up on it in their spare time. The place was jammed, with special rows of seats reserved for soldiers. The most interesting lecture she attended, and the one that caused a great stir in the audience, was delivered by a prominent young poet here by the name of Yitzkhak Shalev who spoke on the Book of Job. He maintains that God's answer to Job's question as to the meaning of his suffering is not only not an answer at all, but actually *un-Jewish,* insofar as Job is prohibited from asking for an answer in the first place. What particularly characterizes the Jew, according to Shalev, is not only his eternal quest for an explanation of human suffering, but his demand that it be mitigated, and that justice be done. The audience became so excited that the meeting had to be called to order. When Shula left, Shalev was still busy answering questions from the floor.

Shula and I discussed this question at great length. Shalev, she says, is only partly right; his criticism of Job—that is to say, the Jew's quest for justice, his challenge to God himself—is only one strain of Jewish thought. More prominent is a passive, willful acceptance of suffering: for the Rambam, man cannot hope to know the answer; he must accept life the way it is, and praise God. Shalev's thinking, she goes on, is characteristic of modern thought in general—but what's the difference? Beyond a love of the Bible for itself, for the sake of its language, its literary value, these questions no longer have any value for the modern Jew. Not as far as a relationship to God is concerned.

She herself, Shula tells me, was lucky. Born in Poland, and there during the German occupation, she spent the war hidden in a convent. Of the rest of her family, only her mother survived. How is it possible for any Jew to still believe in God after the *sho'a,* the holocaust? Are we to seriously believe that what Eichmann was allowed to do, for example, was part of a divine plan? That it has some transcendent meaning?

"It's a question of keeping faith," she says.

"How do you mean?"

"Keeping faith with the dead. If you managed to live through it, it was an accident. How could you dare to believe in a God who chose you to live when so many others suffered so much and died without any hope?"

April 2

PESACH AT KIBBUTZ N. Perhaps eight hundred people at a Seder which is held in the huge dining hall: long rows of tables on which bottles of wine and orange juice have been set together with plates of cold chicken, salad, chopped liver, and matzos. As this is an extraordinary occasion, the kids are eating with their parents. They squirm in their seats with excitement, shout and laugh, or sing along with the band that has just struck up: two accordians and a piano. Soon everyone is singing, clapping their hands to the medley of Israeli songs, while the settlement's cultural director—short and fat with a fringe of bushy hair—frantically rushes around trying to get the Seder underway. The Hagaddah to be followed is a variant of the traditional one, published for the use of those kibbutzim which belong to the Hashomer Hatzair. Interspersed with musical flourishes, in part read aloud by various members of the settlement who are seated throughout the hall, the Seder finally begins. Excerpts from the Bible, the Song of Songs (". . . the voice of the turtle," etc.); a poem by Ibn Ezra celebrating the coming of spring; more poems by Joseph ben Joseph, Rabbi Kalir, and the contemporary, Shlanski, all on the same theme of the rebirth of the land, the passing of the rains, the time of the planting of the crops. A dance by six young girls.

The crowd is growing restless, chattering aloud during the reading of parts of the traditional Hagaddah which culminates in a chorus of nine-year-old kids who ask the

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Four Questions. At last we eat, and when we are finished, most of the orange juice is gone, while the wine bottles remain more than half full. . . Even noisier than before; the crowd refuses to let the speakers be heard until one of the settlement's founders, a vigorous man in his middle sixties who at present occupies an important governmental position, reads a *Yiskor*: a remembrance and memorial to the heroes and martyrs of the recent years of Jewish history. It is a vow not to forget, particularly to remember "all those who fell in the battles of our redemption, and who, by their death, command us to live." Next, a song by a chorus: the "Song of the Fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto" which Shlanski has translated from Yiddish into Hebrew.

"Yes, it's the heroes, the fighters, that are celebrated. Not that the others are forgotten, mind you, but still . . . it's natural, I suppose. Take myself. I lost a father at Auschwitz, and a brother here, during the War of Liberation. . . . When I think of the dead, it's easier to think about Aaron, my brother, the soldier, the one who at least dies with a gun in his hands."

This from Moshe, a *chaver* of the kibbutz who fought with the British Army during the Second World War. "What do you think of the Seder?" he asks. The crowd now completely drowns out the voice of a girl who is trying to read a passage from Isaiah.

"Too many people," Moshe goes on, "that's the trouble."

He admits that the new Hagaddah is an experiment, and not completely satisfactory, particularly if you're used to the old.

"Yes," I tell him. "Something is missing, something to give it all a necessary meaning, a unity."

"God," he laughs. "You can say it. It's not a dirty word. What's missing is giving thanks to some kind of God. . ."

April 8

JERUSALEM IS CRAWLING with reporters from all over the world. Dinner at a Hungarian restaurant on King George Street with a party of German journalists at the next table. The boss, who escaped from Budapest just before the Nazis marched in, profusely apologizes to the Germans because he still has only matzos and no bread to serve with the meal. There is so much talk in the air about Eichmann that a story making the rounds tells of the *muhktar* of an Arab village who, without knowing who Eichmann was, wanted to rename a street after him in order to ingratiate himself with the authorities.

April 10

10:45 P.M. The trial begins at 9 in the morning; but tonight, as usual in Jerusalem, the streets are quiet, almost completely deserted, recalling the joke about the Englishman who spent years here serving in the Palestine constabulary, and who, when he returned to Jerusalem for a visit, asked why the curfew was still in effect.

April 12

TALKS WITH REPORTERS. This afternoon, a young German who is covering the trial for a West German paper. A mutual friend, a Turk here for the *Tanin Journal* in Istanbul, tried to introduce us twice; but when I began a conversation, the German politely excused himself and walked away. Now in the pressroom, he sits on the edge of a table and smokes, holding the cigarette between the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, delicately gesturing with it in the air. In his late twenties, he is short, good-looking, with pale blue eyes and thick blonde hair.

"Well, what do you make of it?" he asks. And when I shrug, he smiles: "Yes, what can one really say?"

"How long will you stay?"

"Three weeks, perhaps, not more. . . ." He says there is no real interest in the trial in Germany, no matter what impression the authorities try to give.

"What about the young people?"

"Particularly among the young people. After all, they are innocent. What have they to do with the guilt of the older generation? In any case, types like Eichmann aren't a specific German problem. You have them yourself. The same kind of mentalities in your own military. The ones who gave the orders to drop the bomb on Hiroshima." He tells me that he has just read the letters, or the diary, of the pilot of the Enola Grey: "Very impressive . . . the most terrible thing was that when he was stricken with conscience for what he had done, your generals insisted that he be declared insane, and locked up. . . . This kind of thing is a prob-

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lem for the whole of Western civilization. German youth realizes that, above all. . . ."

Peter S., a Nigerian reporter, tells me that the trial has the deepest significance for Africans. "It's after all a matter of racial discrimination." What goes on now, in South Africa, he said, is just as bad—the same system of repression, concentration camps, forced labor. Someday the world will know about it. The Jews have shown the way. "We'll have our own trials. Wait and see. . . ." He's staying at the King David where he says he finds it impossible to eat in the dining room because of the way people stare when he comes in. For a week now, he has had his meals sent up to his room.

April 14

SHLOMO R. asks me the usual question: if, after seeing Eichmann every day, I have been able to distinguish anything about him which in some way differentiates him from other men.

"No."

"Nothing?"

"Nothing at all. No matter what anyone says, it's impossible."

"I thought so."

"Why do you ask?"

He says he has been thinking about a friend of his in the army with whom he fought in Sinai.

"What about him?"

"Nothing, as you say. That's the whole trouble. . . ."

He apparently was a nice-looking, quiet kid, studying to be an engineer, happily married, and the father of a four-month-old girl. He refused to use his rifle when they went into battle, but waited until there was hand-to-hand fighting in order to swing a fire-ax that he had carried with him all the way from Tel Aviv.

April 15

THE QUESTION OF Eichmann's ordinary appearance obsesses everybody in the court. Another discussion about it in the pressroom this afternoon. A Danish reporter says it reminds him of what happened during the Occupation: the reason people tried to discover what inherently distinguished the Germans was to console themselves, preserve their own illusions of innocence by coming to regard the Germans as aberrations, beasts, things apart from the human race. Granted there were some actual perverts among them, the rest, like it or not, were simply ordinary human beings.

"No."

We all glance up. Listening to the conversation, a young man who is obviously German himself: the Slavic type—high cheek-bones, wide-set eyes, curiously beardless cheeks.

"No," he insists, "it's wrong."

"I tell you they were just ordinary people. *Gewohnlich. . . .*"

"No, it's not true. They were Germans. . . ." The conversation abruptly dies away. A few minutes later I run into the German again on the stairs and say hello—painfully embarrassing because he appears to be so grateful to have somebody to speak to. We decide to go to the King David and change some money, and as we walk, he tells me that he is twenty-one years old, here to cover the trial for some small Bavarian dailies. In Israel now for two weeks, he says the trip has been one of the most important experiences of his entire life. "But I . . . how can I express it? I am so sad. I have never in my life been so ashamed. . . ."

He seems to be literally overcome by the shame of just being German, tormented by his memories of when, as a child of five toward the end of the war, he witnessed the evacuation of Jews from a concentration camp near his town. They were driven like animals through the main street; blood, whips, and screams. "Like a dream . . . a nightmare." From the forest close by, shots in the night. "I still have dreams about it . . . everybody in the town knew what was happening. I know that now. But nobody did anything, nobody even said anything. . . ." It's not that the Germans were cowards, he tells me. Every day, thousands of them were dying heroes' deaths on the battlefields. "The Germans are very brave, but only willing to die for the wrong thing. . . . Why? That's the question. Can you tell me the reason for that?" Now he has lapsed into German, rambling on about Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov,* and Ivan's protest, his refusal to accept a world into which God allows the suffering and death of even one innocent child. "And we Germans tortured and murdered millions of them. Yesterday I saw a picture of a little

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boy at Belsen. A little corpse. You could see that before he died they had put out one of his eyes."

This in a voice so loud that the passers-by stop and stare. At the King David he speaks English to the cashier who somehow assumes that his nationality is American. "No, no, German," he stammers, showing his passport with reluctance. He says that he is even ashamed of that—the way the nationality, *Deutscher,* is stamped in huge letters at the bottom of the page.

A TALK WITH L., a survivor of the Vilna Ghetto and Auschwitz. He has a livid scar running diagonally across his forehead from just under the hairline to the right eyebrow which I assume he received during the war, although he says nothing about it.

Astonished at his capacity to re-experience the horror of what the Germans did, L. tells me that he cannot get Hausner's story of the labor card out of his mind: the incident of the Jew who was given only one card for his family with the result that he was forced to choose whether his wife or mother was to be sent to the gas chamber.

"That's what they did," he says. "Deliberately, and again and again. They have destroyed us all. . . . There is no good or evil anymore."

April 16

AN AMERICAN REPORTER told me that he heard from the bartender at "My Bar"—a joint here popular with the newspapermen—that G., the young German, had a couple too many the other night, and broke down and wept uncontrollably after spending the day listening to Hausner describing the death camps. When I see G. myself in the afternoon, he mentions nothing about it, but apologetically, with great hesitation, says that another German reporter staying with him at the German hospice told him that the Jews too committed terrible atrocities during the War of Independence.

". . . At Der Yasin. He said they cut open pregnant women. Terrible things. . . . Never mind," he pats me on the shoulder, "I know him. An anti-Semite. . . ."

April 18

AN INTERVIEW at the Hebrew University with Doctor Bernard Casper, the dean of students. He is deeply religious, and when I ask him if the holocaust has necessitated any fundamental change in the Jew's traditional beliefs, he says no; why should it? The holocaust was different only in degree from what the Jew has suffered throughout history. "We must strengthen our individual attitudes toward evil and the problem of guilt." I mention Shalev and his characterization of the Book of Job. No, he says, Shalev is wrong. Job is typically Jewish, and the essence of his belief, and the belief of the Jew, is contained in the words with which Job dismisses the consolations of the comforters: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

When I tell this to a friend, a sabra studying law at the Hebrew University, he laughs.

AN EVENING spent in the home of Shoshanna Raziel, the widow of the founder of the Irgun who was killed fighting for the British in Iraq in 1941. In her forties, stout, with a prematurely lined face, she somehow still retains a remnant of the great beauty she must have once possessed. It's her smile, perhaps; she still smiles with that charming unself-consciousness that only a very beautiful woman will allow herself: a certain confidence that comes from the awareness that just having looked at her, you are already in love.

She tells me that she has been listening to the broadcasts of the trial with great interest, and for the first time, suddenly, she realizes that there may be something to Eichmann's defense that he was only following orders. When she was in the underground, she says, she very often had to order people to do things that would be inconceivable in normal times. Once, she says, she released another girl from her obligation to take part in an "operation," but only because the girl was terrified that the sight of a corpse would paralyze her and so endanger the lives of everyone else.

The real reason for anti-Semitism throughout all these centuries, she says, has been the presumption of the Jews themselves that they are a Chosen People. "Chosen for what?" she asks—"hanging, burning, castration, endless anguish, unending suffering," she recites, reading aloud from a poem by Avram Stern, the LHI terrorist. "Enough. There must be an end to it."

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I ask her what her husband felt, if he was religious, if he accepted the premise that the Jew had a transcendent mission to fulfill. She says he was brought up in a religious home, and accepted his upbringing. Tormented by doubts, suffering a spiritual crisis at the age of seventeen, he knew he would never be able to resolve the problem, and so pragmatically decided to continue to be as observant as before, without ever trying to impose his views on anyone else. . . . No, no, she repeats, enough of this designation of the Jews as a special people, a light unto the Gentiles. Why should we be an example to the world? If this were really so, we shouldn't try Eichmann. We ought to let him go free. . . .

She shows me a cherished memento of her life with her husband—a small German pistol that he gave her as a present on her sixteenth birthday.

April 20

INDEPENDENCE DAY. After the parade, Larry K., an American Jew doing political research in the country for a Midwestern university, tells me that he couldn't help feeling proud at the display of military strength: the long rows of perfectly aligned paratroopers with their maroon berets, the girls marching with sub-machine guns, the roaring tanks and weapon carriers, and yet —wistfully, his favorite Jewish joke comes to mind: the story of the Russian Jew drafted into the army during the Japanese war who's given a rifle and sent to the front.

"Fire!" his officer commands him.

"Fire—are you crazy?" says the Jew. "I might hurt somebody. Can't you see there are *people* out there?"

April 26

AT A PARTY LAST NIGHT, slightly drunk, my friend from the Hebrew University gets into a vehement argument about the trial. As a student of law, he maintains that it never should have been held in the first place, that there is no legal basis for it, that it's a show, and not a trial at all, etc., etc. Much later, now completely drunk, he tells me that he has stopped reading about it in the papers because it has given him recurrent nightmares. ". . . And I've never had a bad dream in my life." Last night, he dreamed he was a prisoner in Auschwitz. It's gotten so that now he's afraid to turn out the light and go to sleep.

"Typical. A classic example," says R., when I relate the incident. He himself came to the country from Poland twelve years ago. "Classic. Classic," he repeats, literally rubbing his hands. It's what he's been saying all along; that the sabra's fetish of normalcy, his rejection of everything having to do with the *Galut*, is in itself paradoxically abnormal, or neurotic, insofar as it is the result of that kind of repression. Only when they are strong enough to confront the past, accept it, will they be able to assimilate its best elements, its great civilizing achievements, and create a culture worthy of the reconstituted Jewish nation.

May 5

MARTIN BUBER. His shaggy mustache and yellowish white beard completely obscure his mouth, so that, unable to read his lips, I occasionally have difficulty in understanding his German accent.

". . . But tell me, please, if there is anything you don't understand," he insists; and at the very beginning, alone with him in his study, after we shake hands and sit down: "Tell me about yourself."

And he listens, looking into my eyes: a little old man sitting behind a desk piled with papers and galley sheets, with an absorption so immediate and intense that in retrospect I cannot remember even glancing away to look around the room. Once, perhaps; there are bookcases to the left, lining the wall, and behind him—but exactly where?—the framed photograph of an old woman with white hair.

"Ah—" a smile. "Although from what you say I'm sure you understand, you must not try to grasp the meaning, the horror, of what is being revealed in the trial with the rational mind alone. You must not try to rationalize too much."

When I start to scribble down his words, he asks me not to write as we speak. And then, obviously aware of my embarrassment, my fear that I have somehow offended him, he smiles again, so spontaneously and infectiously that I grin in return. No, no, it's just that he wants me not only to listen to what he has to say, but respond to him, talk.

"Jacob and the angel," he repeats, "yes. . . ." The Jew does not admit a dualistic

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explanation of evil, the demonic derives from God, and so it seems that with Jacob it is the Almighty Himself who attacks us, implicates us. . . . Yes, the terrible story of the labor cards—and yet, and again, we must not rationalize too much, for this is the mystery, the real duality, that man was created as he is to begin with, with a self-consciousness, and a will of his own that may act in opposition to God. This is the wrestling that one must apprehend, exalt, and accept in the depths of the soul, the fight that goes on until death.

"And I accept it," he tells me, ". . . until death."

Then, with another smile: "I, for one, have never regretted the loss of Paradise. . . ."

For a moment, we chat about G., the young German, who told me that he wrote Buber himself, and through him, as a matter of fact, got his room in the German hospice.

"How old is he?"

"Twenty-one."

Too young, Buber says. It's too much, overwhelming for a child of that age to have to write about Eichmann.

The trial again, my thought that the evil of Nazism, which may or may not be apprehended rationally, is terrifying precisely because it seems to have its roots in man's unconscious; his irrational desire to reduce himself and his fellow human beings to the status of an object, so that even the possibility of a dialogue between man and man is entirely obviated. Do I find this to be universally true, he asks, or an isolated pathological phenomenon?

". . . Widely spread, in any case."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-eight."

Interesting. He himself, he tells me, was not so intelligent at my age, and when I feel obliged to protest, he says no; it's quite true. He developed quite slowly. It wasn't until forty that he had an idea of his own. . . . In any case, despite all the evidence to the contrary—the attraction of the modern totalitarian systems—he does not believe that this self-destructive urge is as ubiquitous as I believe. It exists, of course, he must admit, on the level of ordinary existence, as part of the ordinary relationships between man and man, and man and woman, but this is because of the basic constitution of our mentalities: our proclivity to objectify and symbolize. Still, there are moments in all our lives when we are able to regard ourselves and each other as human beings. "There are moments of grace. . . ."

Faith, he says. Without it, it is impossible to live. Somehow we must have the strength and the faith of a Job.

". . . Even though He slay me. . . ."

"Yes," he says, "that and something else. . . ." A sense of humor, of course; that blessed and special, curious objectivity about ourselves that comes to one, for example, when one is ill and suffering very much; that ability that we have to regard ourselves while we are still within ourselves. With Jacob again: this very objectivity as a blessing and a curse.

"Yes," he says. "He was crippled too." And of Israel? . . . Time. Now it is absorbed in a specific political, social, geographical, and historical struggle to reestablish its nationhood. Indifferent for the moment to its transcendent mission, it will in time be true to itself again. Even now, there are many of its young people who have unself-consciously assumed this burden. "From time to time they come to me and we talk." In any case, throughout our history, the history of the human race, it has been a struggle of the minority against the majority in this respect, and this wrestling, too, is good. "Patience," he tells me, "historical patience and faith. It will take two or three generations, but wait and see. . . ."

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PAUL GOODMAN

UTOPIAN THINKING

After a long spell of Marxian "scientific" realism and businessmen's "hard-headed" realism, our social scientists have begun to praise "utopian thinking." Since the war, the cultural anthropology of the Americans has thus taken the following course: first, a flood of popular social criticism, and now an emphasis on goals and utopias. What is meant by such language? When is it used? What does it conceal?

This new praise of utopian thinking occurs in the context of our surplus technology. There is a vast productive capacity already lying idle, and the threat of sharply increased efficiency with automation. It is necessary to use capital and labor for some purpose or other, if only for plausible fantasies, and utopias promise more efficient planned consumption than the synthetic demand created by advertising. This may not be a bad thing. Luxury corrupts, and though moral corruption is wicked and usually foolish, it is rarely explosive and sometimes amiable. For instance, even the Soviet Union, as it tends to become a "have" nation, seems to become less Calvinist and fanatical. And when in our country David Riesman urges the youth of Kansas to build a mountain so that they can have manly work and enjoy skiing, one does not know whether to cry or laugh or cheer. Such an expedient is less morally outrageous than planned obsolescence. And it is certainly no more dismaying than our present Mass Leisure.

Paul Goodman published last year a collection of fiction, *Our Visit to Niagara*, as well as the much-discussed social study *Growing Up Absurd*. The present essay is from his new book, *Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals*, which Random House has scheduled for January.

Naturally, utopian ideas for using up a surplus will not exhibit the common sense and parsimonious sweetness of Fourier or William Morris trying to remedy harsh conditions of labor by proving that centralized production is not necessary for happiness. Nor will there be a premium on the abstract justice and wisdom that inspired Plato or Thomas More, for it is characteristic of our period (as I shall argue below) that moral choices are considered irrelevant. Our new utopian thinking seems rather to comprise:

(1) A heavy indulgence in the sensational technologism of Bellamy, Sant'Elia, and science fiction; that is to say, visions of vaster and more marvelous achievements in the technical and managerial style that we are already used to. But this is soon admixed with the anti-utopianism of *Brave New World*—the suspicion that more such advancements will settle us for good. A variant of such utopias is the plea for "future-thinking," like Margaret Mead's proposal to cut History out of the universities and substitute Chairs of the Future. In principle, future-thinking is the extrapolation of our present ways, a combination of market research and the theory of games; the one thing that the "future" must not change is the rules. (History deals, at least, with different kinds of error.)

(2) But a more useful property of our technology is its plasticity, the opportunity it offers for alternative choices of power, raw materials, location, tooling, and a surplus for transition and re-tooling. Thus, we could decentralize instead of centralizing, with probably equivalent efficiency. We seem at present to be trying to choose between more public goods or more leisure goods; we could even choose more leisure without more

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goods, but this would perhaps involve moral and political alternatives that are excluded. Now to make interesting choices, inventive imagination is indispensable. When people were asked about twenty years ago, "What do you want in your postwar house?" the responses were hopelessly banal, and Catherine Bauer wisely commented, "People can want only what they know." One must invent something and show it to them. But there is nothing utopian about inventions; they either work and win their way, or they fail.

Perhaps ideas are "utopian," however, when they work and do *not* win their way, like the nickel-cadmium battery, or like Fuller's Dymaxion automobile, a better car that did not fit in with the plans of Detroit, which has proceeded for twenty-five years to dole out less drastic improvements, until spurred by Europe. This brings us, I think, to the virulent meaning of "utopian," the sense in which it is controversial.

(3) Ideas are called "utopian" when they seem to be useful but they propose a different style, a different procedure, a different kind of motivation than the way people at present do business. Such ideas may make obvious common sense and may, technically, be very easy to effectuate; all the more will they be called "impractical" and "an imposition on people by experts and intellectuals," with a vehemence that indicates a powerful psychological resistance. Let me tell a melancholy anecdote.

An executive of the Columbia Broadcasting System recently asked me, as an "intellectual," to outline an article critical of TV, for they planned to put out a highbrow magazine to recoup, by self-criticism, the prestige lost in the quiz scandals. He said they were even afraid of losing their franchise. Since I have a positive turn of mind, I dutifully offered as my contribution a few proposals for good programs. (One that I remember was to allow Franz Kline, Picasso, Cocteau, etc. to create half-hour montages on the screen, and so explore what the medium can do. This would evoke a "storm" of ridicule and protest—as many as twenty letters—but it would be looked at and might do a public service.) To my surprise, my innocent proposals cast the executive into consternation. "You don't get the idea at all," he said; "we want you to criticize unsparingly. We can handle that. We know that TV is lousy, but it's inevitably so. But now you try to show that it could be different!" (P. S. I did not get the job.)

There is no doubt that the term "utopian thinking" is importantly used to conceal the statement: *The structure and folkways of our society are absurd, but they can no longer be changed. Any hint of changing them disturbs our resignation and rouses anxiety. Cruelly, for things are well enough as they are.*

II

In a technical sense, to call a utopian proposal "impractical" is ludicrous. Consider the actualities of the recent generation, since the depression. In New York City alone there has been built, at more than a million dollars a mile, the entire parkway system: the East and West Side Drives; the Belt, Henry Hudson, Saw Mill River, and Bronx River Parkways; the Cross-County and Major Deegan Expressways; the Thruway; the Whitestone and Triboro Bridges; the Holland Tunnel, two Lincoln Tunnels, the Queens-Midtown and Brooklyn-Battery Tunnels, etc. These have entirely transformed the residential pattern of the city and the behavior of its inhabitants, revolutionized land values, produced a different kind of suburban culture. In the central city itself, whole neighborhoods have been disrupted, razed, replaced by tall housing in low- and middle-income ghettos. No utopian planner would dare propose or would want to propose such vast, disruptive and expensive changes as this colossal, bad planning effectuated by Robert Moses and his associates. Again in less than thirty years the entire pattern of culture and entertainment in the United States has been transformed, centralized, intensified, stereotyped, and debased by the TV and TV networks, invading more than 70 per cent of the homes and hypnotizing more hours of attention per day than anything since the Tibetan prayer wheels. The most misguided religious reformer would not have fantasized a comparable ritual observance. And in the same period, again, the peculiar complex of graduated income taxes, swollen expense accounts, diners' clubs, and the new hotels, has dovetailed with the absolute novelty of

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standardized air travel and with the American zeal for making casual acquaintances, to create extraordinary institutions like business trips, conventions, panel discussions, and sessions of brainstorming. Thousand-mile journeys that used to be undertaken only by commercial travelers and itinerant lecturers have suddenly become routine for the whole middle class. Naturally, between this and the TV, any regional differences that once existed have vanished into the sameness of Hilton Hotels and Hertz drive-yourself cars. (For serious planners this history is a model of how great and many-sided changes come about through a combination of fiscal, technological, and psychological factors.) And finally, it is scarcely fifteen years since the atom bomb has altered what we mean by peace and war.

But the other criticism that is made of utopian ideas, that they propose an unusual dictatorial imposition upon people, is equally unrealistic. Not only has the physical behavior of most of us been rudely altered by the new techniques and institutions, but people are entrapped in them far more totally than we Americans, at least, were ever accustomed to. This has been the chief burden of the social criticism of the organization, the bureaucracy, the status-seeking, the advertising, the standard of living, the methods of wielding control and managing initiative. Immensely proliferating, the system pre-empts nearly all the space, all the channels, and all the resources. As Darwin would have said, it is a successful new species, like the rabbits in Australia. It dictates the style of drama and the format of debate. By its centralizing and stereotyping, it disrupts community and individuality, which are then, for necessary creature comfort and social security, reconstituted by conforming to a pantheon of canned symbols. All human societies are patterns of culture, but the present American—and increasingly worldwide—pattern has superseded the old with great suddenness; and it has certainly had the effect of being imposed, for it has created affectlessness, delinquency, fad without style, role without task, and inquiry after "goals," as if goals were not implicit in concrete activity.

Nevertheless, inept as it seems, the charge that "utopian thinking" is impractical and an imposition does have a meaning. It is a subtle meaning, but devastatingly important.

THE RAPID CHANGES and impositions that have actually occurred in recent years have not *directly* impinged on each person's sense of his individual "personality," his liberty of choice, his privacy, his bodily intactness, his sexual and family behavior. On a broader view it is obvious that, indirectly, the individual is entrapped, seduced, pushed, limited—in his education, his jobs, his hygiene, his politics, his marriage, and parenthood; but his "personality" is kept pretty inviolate, perhaps even more so than in previous generations. (The exceptions are the draft and desegregation.) The provisions of the Constitution and the immediate moral outrage of all the other personalities protect individuality and the sanctity of the home. (In other less politically fortunate lands, e.g., Africa, the imposition of our technical ways causes much more personal and community hurt and is reacted to violently.)

Now it is just this feeling of individual intactness that we "utopians" who think in terms of common sense and direct action toward obvious goods continually seem to violate. Our simple-minded proposals make people feel foolish and timid; our plea for community wakes up sleeping dogs and rebellious hopes; we mention ancient wisdom that everybody believes but has agreed to regard as irrelevant; and all this among people who *in fact* have little control of the means of production or power, but are nicely habituated to the complicated procedures of the moment and get satisfaction by identifying with them. Therefore, paradoxically, the simpler and more easily effected the ideas we suggest—the less "utopian" they are—the more they are *really* impractical for these people. If we recommend an old-fashioned straightforward procedure, we seem to be asking that a foreign or "advance-guard" way of life be imposed. Naturally, we who are beguiled by the sirens of reason, animal joy, and lofty aims, fail to notice how far out into left field we sometimes stray; but we are most out of contact in naively believing that, given simple means and a desirable end, something can be *done*.

This is the crux of the argument over

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utopian thinking. It *is* true that the organized American system has invaded people's personalities, even though it protects every man's individuality, privacy, and liberty of choice. For the system has sapped initiative and the confidence to make fundamental changes. It has sapped self-reliance and therefore has dried up the spontaneous imagination of ends and the capacity to invent ingenious expedients. By disintegrating communities and confronting isolated persons with the overwhelming processes of the whole society, it has destroyed human-scale and deprived people of manageable associations that can be experimented with.

I do not think that this result is inevitable in the use of scientific technology and mass communications. It is not hard to think up industrial arrangements that fire initiative rather than dampen it. There are known methods of education and organs of culture to counteract sheepishness, and they could be encouraged instead of neglected. But the case is that, whether innocently or cynically, our present procedures and those who manage them have exerted and do exert a poisonous moral influence. To demonstrate this point it is not necessary to explore details like subliminal advertising or wire-tapping, except to see that they are logical next steps.

Gentlemen of power who claim, perhaps ingenuously, that "we give people what they want, we cannot impose higher standards on them," ought to ask themselves if they are taking responsibility for the sheer quantity of messages and objects with which they swamp the public, for the pre-emption of space and resources, for the monopolistic exclusion of alternatives, and worst of all, for trivializing the earnest by glamorizing the base, catering to a low standard. In a recent address, Dr. Thomas Coffin of the National Broadcasting Company reassured his (Ethical Culture) audience that radio and TV really had little effect on "basic moral values." (He cited a sociological study.) Surprisingly, the audience exclaimed that that was just the worst of it, that such a vast quantity of communication and entertainment filled up the foreground of attention and *had* no moral effect, and this in itself was a disastrous moral effect, for it made moral choice inarticulate and irrelevant. For instance, when thousands of hours are taken up by mere entertainment, we can be sure that there will be little dramatic art that purges and changes the audience; and there will be a jaded audience slow to respond to anything essential. Again like the rabbits in Australia, these enterprises proliferate because they never meet with a moral enemy head-on; but indirectly they win out by eating up the crops.

Recent history, however, seems to show that this system is not altogther viable. Granted that the current "social criticism" and "utopian thinking" are mainly means of griping and being adventurous without acting, yet we must also take them at face value as voices of dissent. A more important symptom is the increasing polarization of attitudes. Among the young, there are those who are content and able to perform, and those who are totally disgusted and withdraw: the squares and the beats—with the hip playing it cool whether as juvenile delinquents or aspiring junior executives. And in the adult world that the young graduate into, there is a polarizing between economy and vocation; between "communications" and honest speech innocent of public relations; between *Realpolitik* and politics; between scientific technology and the humanities. Put crudely, the means lack goods and the goods lack means. Groups polarize, with mutual resentment, according to whether they need to be in the swim, busy and identifying with power, or are honorably baffled and protestant. "Utopians," however, are praised because they are neither realistic nor resigned, but have, as Riesman once said, "the nerve of failure" (a jolly state of life). They still think that machines are meant to be useful, that work is a productive activity, that politics aims at the common weal, and in general that something can be done. These are now utopian ideals.

III

Let me use ideas of mine as an example, since I am notoriously a "utopian thinker." That is, on problems great and small, I try to think up direct expedients that do not follow the usual procedures, and they are always called "impractical" and an "imposition on people by an intellectual." The question is—and I shall try to pose it fairly—in what sense are such expedients really practical, and in what

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sense are they really *not* practical? Consider half a dozen little thumbnail ideas:

The ceremony at my boy's public school commencement is poor. We ought to commission the neighborhood writers and musicians to design it. There is talk about aiding the arts, and this is the way to advance them, for, as Goethe said, "The poetry of public occasions is the highest kind." It gives a real subject to the poet, and ennobles the occasion.

Similarly, we do not adequately use our best talents. We ought to get our best designers to improve some of the thousands of ugly small towns and make them unique places to be proud of, rather than delegating such matters to professionals in bureaucratic agencies, when we attend to them at all. A few beautiful models would be a great incentive to others.

In our educational system, too much is spent for plant and not enough for teachers. Why not try, as a pilot project, doing without the school building altogether for a few hundred kids for most of the day? Conceive of a teacher in charge of a band of ten, using the city itself as the material for the curriculum and the background for the teaching. Since we are teaching *for* life, try to get a little closer to it. My guess is that one could considerably diminish the use of present classrooms and so not have to increase their number.

The problem with the old ladies in a Home is to keep them from degenerating, so we must provide geriatric "occupational therapy." The problem with the orphans in their Home is that, for want of individual attention, they may grow up as cold or "psychopathic personalities." But the old ladies could serve as grandmothers for the orphans, to their mutual advantage. The meaning of community is people using one another as resources.

It is false to say that community is not possible in a great city, for 6,000,000 can be regarded as 2,000 neighborhoods of 3,000. These make up one metropolis and enjoy its central advantages, yet they can have a variety of particular conditions of life and have different complexes of community functions locally controlled. E.g. many neighborhoods might have local control of their small grade schools, with the city enforcing minimum standards and somewhat equalizing the funds. Political initiative is the means of political education.

In any city, we can appreciably diminish commutation by arranging mutually satisfactory exchanges of residence to be near work. The aim of planning is to diminish in-between services that are neither production nor consumption. More generally, if this wasted time of commutation were considered *economically* as part of the time of labor, there would soon be better planning and more decentralization.

In New York City, the automobile traffic is not worth the nuisance it causes. It would be advantageous simply to ban all private cars. Nearly everyone would have faster transportation. Besides, we could then close off about three-quarters of the streets and use them as a fund of land for neighborhood planning.

NOW, APART FROM the particular merits or demerits of any of these ideas, what is wrong with this *style* of thinking, that aims at far-reaching social and cultural advantages by direct and rather dumb-bunny expedients? I think that we can see very simply why it is "utopian."

It is risky. The writers and musicians designing the commencement ceremony would offend the parents, and the scandal would be politically ruinous to the principal, the school board, and the mayor. Nobody expects the ceremonial to be anything but boring, so let sleeping dogs lie. Artists are conceited anyway and would disdain the commissions. So with the small towns: the "best designers" would make the local hair stand on end. As for the thought of children being educated by roaming the streets and blocking traffic, it is a lulu and the less said the better.

Further, such thinking confuses administrative divisions. Community arrangements are always awkwardly multi-purpose. What department is responsible? Who budgets? It is inefficient not to have specialized equipment, special buildings, and specialists.

Further, community creates conflict, for incompatibles are thrown together. And there is definitely an imposition of values. "Community" is an imposed value, for many people want to be alone instead of sharing responsibilities or satisfactions; that is why they came to the big city. The notion of living near work, or of a work-residence community, implies that people like their work; but most people today don't.

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Further, most such proposals are probably illegal; there would never be an end to litigation. They override the usual procedures, so there is no experience of the problems that might arise; one cannot assess consequences or refer to standard criteria.

Further, they are impracticable. To effect a change in the usual procedures generally requires the pressure of some firm that will profit by it; such things do not happen just because they would be "advantageous"; one can hardly get the most trivial zoning regulation passed.

Finally, such proposals are impractical if only because they assume that the mass of people have more sense and energy than they in fact have. In emergencies, people show remarkable fortitude and choose sensible values and agree to practical expedients because it is inevitable; but not ordinarily. The quotation from Goethe is typical; it is "true," but not for us.

This is a fair picture of our dilemma. A direct solution of social problems disturbs too many fixed arrangements. Society either does not want such solutions, or it is not up to them—it comes to the same thing. The possibility of a higher quality of experience arouses distrust rather than enthusiasm. People must be educated slowly. On the other hand, the only way *to* educate them, to change the present tone, is to cut through habits, especially the character-defense of saying "nothing can be done" and withdrawing into conformity and privacy. We must prove by experiment that direct solutions are feasible. To "educate" in the accustomed style only worsens the disease. And if we do *not* improve the standard of our present experience, it will utterly degenerate.

The dilemma is a sociological and psychological one. Our present "organized" procedures are simply not good enough to cope with our technological changes. They debase the users of science, they discourage inventive solutions, they complicate rather than simplify, they drive away some of the best minds. Yet other procedures rouse anxiety and seem unrealistic and irresponsible—whether or not they actually are. The question is, what kind of social science can solve a dilemma of this kind? Let us approach this question by deviating to a more philosophical consideration.

IV

In my opinion Americans have lost the spirit of their pragmatic philosophy, even while following the letter. We pay a good deal of attention to "methods" in the solving of problems, just as "scientific knowledge" is applied to technology; but the right method has ceased to be the particular solving *of* the concrete problem. For James and Dewey, the end and the means, the moral-practical and the instrumental, derive meaning from their intrinsic connection in process, and there is no other meaning. One cannot have "usual procedures" or the problems also become empty of value. Problem or goal suffuses and energizes an enterprise from the beginning and creates means and methods; and the problem or goal is transformed and made definite by carrying the enterprise through.

It is this pragmatic idea that we in America have been losing as we have moved from the expanding industrialism of the 19th century to the affluent technologism of today. (Perhaps our "problems" are not serious enough; and the serious problems are disregarded.) Men used to work the machines, also forming themselves to the machine—this was the lesson of Veblen and of the early thinking of Frank Lloyd Wright. Now it is coming to be that the machines work themselves, and the men are formed passively on the system of production and the products; they are creatures of their standard of living and of their roles. In the logic of science, the operational definition of meaning (that the meaning of a proposition lies in the operations that test it), which began as an exquisite refinement of Dewey's instrumentalism, now tends to put both human problems and the nature of things pretty far out of sight, and therefore "truth" is interpreted as the self-expanding and self-correcting system of scientific operations in isolation from anything else—and scientific knowledge is then "applied." In sociology and politics, on the other hand, the noble pragmatic aim of developing a natural ethics and a moral politics has degenerated into a dreary teleology of fixed and arbitrary "values," "national goals," and even profits and ratings. What is the condition of a society whose "goals" are not implicit in its activity, but have to be sought out by a Presidential

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Commission and imposed! In pedagogy, contrast the pragmatic progressive method of learning by experimental work in a functional community, to educate the "whole child," with the technological-teleological program of teaching predetermined lessons by a teaching machine that reinforces lessons. We have come to the very antithesis of pragmatism. In this new climate, where experts plan in terms of an unchangeable structure, a pragmatic expediency that still wants to take the social structure as plastic and changeable comes to be thought of as "utopian." And meantime, of course, the structure is really changing with violent rapidity —impractically.

What would be a pragmatic method in the social sciences?

The closest approximation in official sociology is that caucus of the American Sociological Association that calls itself the Social Problems Approach. The Approach is to choose a problem area, to work it with research and analysis, and to find a solution. But I attended a congress of this group last winter and, to my chagrin, I heard paper after paper choose interesting areas and "do" sociology, but there was hardly ever a solution. Nor could there be, because the sociologists did not have that kind of pragmatic involvement *in* the problem by which a solution might emerge; they were applying "methods." The problem was treated too "objectively," as if it were not a human problem and therefore one that also implicated the investigator personally. There were too many "hypotheses," as though the problems did not require inventive solutions, to be found only *in* the solving. Naturally there was a lot of testing but little experiment. (If there is a real social problem, with stubborn participants who are not fools, something must be changed in how the problem is taken or it will not give way. For instance, we might uncover "inner conflicts" and change the locus, e.g. in racial troubles; or make a new invention and find new resources, e.g. for economically depressed regions; or we might have to change the political structure in which the problem exists, e.g. nuclear war.)

An interesting use of a really experimental approach has been made at Earlham College in Indiana, especially by William Biddle, in a course called Community Dynamics. Here the method is for the professor and students to go into the problem area, to study and work with the people involved; they irradiate the problem from within, with such science and understanding as they have; and, in reported cases, solutions have emerged from their participation. Clearly this is both classical progressive education and classical pragmatic sociology.

LET US SPELL OUT a list of postulates for a pragmatic social science:

(1) The fact that the problem is being studied is a factor in the situation. The experimenter is one of the participants and this already alters the locus of the problem, usefully objectifying it.

(2) The experimenter cannot know definitely what he is after, he has no fixed hypothesis to demonstrate, for he hopes that an unthought-of solution will emerge in the process of coping with the problem. It is an "open" experiment.

(3) The experimenter, like the other participants, is "engaged"; he has a moral need to come to a solution, and is therefore willing to change his own conceptions, and even his own character. As Biddle has said: "A hopeful attitude toward man's improvability may become a necessary precondition to further research," for otherwise one cannot morally engage oneself.

(4) Since he does not know the outcome, the experimenter must risk confusion and conflict, and try out untested expedients. The safeguard is to stay in close contact with the concrete situation and to be objective and accurate in observation and reporting, and rigorous in analysis.

In the context of a pragmatic social science, utopian thinking at once falls into place. Utopian ideas may be practical hypotheses, that is, expedients for pilot experimentation. Or they may be stimuli for response, so that people get to know what they themselves mean. The fact that such ideas go against the grain of usual thinking is an advantage, for they thereby help change the locus of the problem, which could not be solved in the usual terms. For instance, they may raise the target of conceivable advantages to a point where certain disadvantages, which were formerly prohibitive, now seem less important. (The assurance of help for an underprivileged child to go to college may

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make it worthwhile for him not to become delinquent. This has been the point of the "utopian" Higher Horizons program in the New York City schools.) Further, if a utopian expedient seems *prima facie* sensible, directly feasible, and technically practical, and is nevertheless unacceptable, there is a presumption that we are dealing with an "inner conflict," prejudice, the need to believe that nothing can be done, and the need to maintain the status quo.

V

AS AN ILLUSTRATION of the several points of this essay, consider utopian planning for increased face-to-face community, people using one another as resources and sharing more functions of life and society. In a recent discussion I had with Herbert Gans of the University of Pennsylvania and other sociologists, it was agreed by all that our present social fragmentation, individual isolation, and family privacy are undesirable. Yet it was also agreed that to throw people together *as they are*—and how else do we have them?—causes inevitable conflicts. Here is our dilemma.

Gans argued that the attempt at community often leads to nothing at all being done, instead of, at least, some useful accommodation. In Levittown, for example, the project for a community school fell through because the middle-class parents wanted a more intensive program to assure their children's "careers" (preparation for "prestige" colleges), whereas the lower-middle-class parents, who had lower status aims, preferred a more "progressive" program. "In such a case," said Gans, "a utopian will give up the program altogether and say that people are stupid."

My view is very different. It is that such a conflict is not an obstacle to community but a golden opportunity, *if the give-and-take can continue, if contact can be maintained.* The continuing conflict cuts through the character-defense of people and *defeats* their stupidity, for stupidity is a character-defense. And the heat of the conflict results in better mutual understanding and fraternity. In Levittown, the job of the sociologist should have been not merely to infer the class conflict, but to bring it out into the open, to risk intensifying it by moving also into concealed snobbery and resentment, and to confront these people with the *ad hominem* problem: are such things indeed more important to you than, as neighbors, educating your children together?

In quarrels of ordinary personal life, the conflict consists usually in the *weights* that are assigned to opposing values, and so the argument must finally be *ad hominem.* This is the use of face-to-face community—it prevents going on with stereotypes and rationalizations. It is risky, but there are excellent sociological and psychological techniques for maintaining and increasing contact in conflict; e.g. the different methods of group therapy, the sociometric methods of Moreno and Infield, Community Dynamics, the proper use of motivational research. Also, it makes no difference if the original issue of conflict is lost, if a better understanding results from the conflict, for then there is a lively future. Just so, it is better if city planning is done by competitive projects, exhibited, explained, and submitted to a popular referendum, rather than handed down by official agencies. People might choose unwisely, but they would be educated in the process, and in the fairly short run there would be better planning.

In our era, to combat the emptiness of technological life, we have to think of a new form, the conflictful community. Historically, close community has provided warmth and security, but it has been tyrannical, antiliberal, and static (conformist small towns). We, however, have to do with already thoroughly urbanized individuals with a national culture and a scientific technology. The Israeli kubbutzim offer the closest approximation. Some of them have been fanatically dogmatic according to various ideologies, and often tyrannical; nevertheless, their urban Jewish members, rather well-educated on the average, have inevitably run into fundamental conflict. Their atmosphere has therefore been sometimes unhappy but never deadening, and they have produced basic social inventions and new character-types. Is such a model improvable and adaptable to cities and industrial complexes? Can widely differing communities be accommodated in a larger federation? How can they be encouraged in modern societies? These are utopian questions.

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WALTER SCHWARZ

VARIETIES OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM

A METHODICAL GHANAIAN civil servant prepared a document recently which he entitled "Blueprint for the Establishment of a Pan-African Airline." It amounted to a proposal to buy one ancient American airplane to fly between Accra and Bamako, carrying beef. There is a transcendent element in Pan-Africanism—heady and lucid as a religion to those who are touched by it, elusive and disturbing to those outside. It shines as brightly from this bureaucrat as it does from his president who announced after a recent state visit to Mali that the two republics had decided on a common parliament, heedless of the fact that they had neither a common frontier nor a common sovereignty. (This was last December and at the time of writing nothing more has ever been heard of the idea.) There is a fierce logic in this nationalism; it separates its practitioners from the rest of mankind, which they in turn divide into those who are for and those who are against them. It condemned Tshombe, Kasavubu, and Mobutu as traitors even in the early days when the balance of statesmanship in the Congo seemed in their favor; it made a hero of Lumumba even when he was behaving like a megalomaniac. It is concerned with, and intensely partisan on, every African matter, from apartheid to Algeria, from British policy in Rhodesia to the explosion of French A-bombs in the Sahara. It applies its own special criteria to every world issue, from the cold war to the movements of commodity prices, from the European Common Market to the disarmament talks.

For all this, Pan-Africanism is but one aspect of the nationalism now paramount in the newly independent states of Black Africa. The pure Pan-Africanists have to contend with other concepts and other temperaments. The outside observer is confronted at the UN with the bewildering spectacle of African delegations—all from newly independent states and all fiercely nationalist—in bitter argument, often voting on opposite sides on such matters as Algeria and the Congo. Disputes about Algeria do not, of course, arise from questions of principle, but from different attitudes to the protagonists, resulting in the advocating of different policies. Conferences of independent states held at Cairo, Casablanca, and Accra have been quite dissimilar in spirit, policy, and participation from other conferences of independent African states held at Abidjan, Brazzaville, or Yaounde. Yet both "sides" reflect Pan-Africanism of a kind, and there are points of contact as well as divergence, not only on politics but also on social and economic policy. The two alignments are not self-contained: some Pan-Africanists are in one camp on one issue, outside it on another. Some

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of the leaders are urbane and "Western" in outlook, others aggressively "African." Some are democrats by training and temperament, others authoritarian. What they all have in common is the feeling, at once exhilarating and overawing, of building a new society. While they are forced to draw heavily on the old world (which for them includes the United States together with the USSR) for materials and manpower as well as ideas, they are aware that what it can offer is inadequate for them. However individuals interpret the challenge, all must face the same underlying problem of how to build an African society in a world which compels them, because of its economic and political pressures, to "catch up" with the West.

It is on the numerous practical issues stemming from this basic dilemma that all the splits and arguments arise: how can a state be genuinely independent while depending economically or militarily on an ex-colonial power? How can Western-type "socialist" ideas be applied to preserve the African-type "socialism"—widely felt to be both traditionally present in the society and necessary for its future—while at the same time appeals are made for large-scale private investments from abroad? How can democratic practice, which is also felt to be traditionally present in Africa, be reconciled with the need to build a cohesive modern state quickly against many odds? How can the spirit of nationalism be fostered in countries whose boundaries—imposed by the colonial powers—correspond to few racial, or tribal, or even geographic, divisions?

In the context of these problems, the kaleidoscope of new regimes can be reshuffled to present different patterns and groupings. Ghana, Guinea, and Mali at present stand out as the radicals, both in their Pan-Africanism (Ghana and Guinea have actually joined in an ill-defined "union") and in their determined application of "socialism" at home. The ex-French countries of West and Central Africa (Ivory Coast, Senegal, Upper Volta, Niger, Dahomey, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Central African Republic, and Gabon) stand out as the political moderates: cooperating closely with France, distrustful of President Nkrumah and his Pan-Africanism, broadly content with the status quo. Nigeria, almost the newest and the biggest of the new countries, appears for the moment to belong to the latter group, as do the Cameroun Republic and Togo. But these are groupings according to strictly political tests. Reshuffle the spectrum according to social doctrine, and Senegal (politically among the Francophilic moderates) moves over to the left. Reshuffle again acording to the closeness of ties with the ex-colonial power, and you have Senegal, Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Chad, Gabon, and Madagascar as formal members of the French Community, while Ivory Coast, Niger, Dahomey, Upper Volta, Cameroun, Togo, Mali, and Guinea remain outside its official legal framework. Ghana, for all its Pan-Africanism, remains in the British Commonwealth, as do Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE only 4.5 million Ghanaians, compared with 35 million Nigerians and 13 million Congolese, it is Ghana and her president, Kwame Nkrumah, who have made the greatest impact as exponents of militant Pan-Africanism. Ghana was first in the postwar queue for independence, and her leader, the ambitious law graduate of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, who later learned his politics during a brief stay at the London School of Economics, happened to have the temperament and outlook that made him take "Africa" more seriously than "Ghana." Nkrumah is easily and frequently dismissed (even by Africans) as "the meddler" or "the showman." A recent dictum made in private, by a British industrialist with important interests in Ghana, is typical of the "outsider's" view: "Kwame has a very nice time of it; we provide him with the money so that he can

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go gallivanting about the continent, talking politics and telling everyone how to run their affairs." This uncomfortable ubiquity of Nkrumah's is frequently the subject of complaints from those it affects more closely. Congolese Vice President Ileo had some hard words to say about it recently in connection with Ghanaian "meddling" in that country (Ghana's ambassador in Leopoldville, it will be remembered, was unceremoniously ejected last fall). Both of Ghana's immediate neighbors, Togo and Ivory Coast, have had bitter quarrels with Nkrumah: over his ambition to unite the Ewe tribe on the two sides of the border, and over his harboring of political exiles. This rather unneighborly behavior—encouraging the subversives of another government—is a policy Nkrumah has borrowed from Nasser. Cairo and Accra have long housed the headquarters of an outlawed Cameroun terrorist organization, the Union des Populations Camerounaises.

This is Nkrumahism seen from the outside. Viewed from the inside, its essential features are insistence on strong, highly centralized government firmly based on a super-efficient party machine, with no toleration of any tendency toward regionalism or federalism; and, in foreign policy, insistence on the ultimate interdependence of all African states in the face of external pressures, especially "neo-colonialism." This latter concept, central to the doctrine of Nkrumaism, envisages the efforts of ex-colonial powers to return "through the back door" by means of economic exploitation and military alliances. Neo-colonialism has found its ideal test in the Congo situation. Indeed, all the principal dilemmas, ideals, bugbears, heroes, and villains of contemporary Africa figure larger than life on the Congo's crowded and eventful stage. Federalism (a special bugbear for Nkrumah, who is only now finally laying to rest the separatist tendencies of his own troublesome Ashanti region) was the undoing of Lumumba. Private letters of fraternal, or rather paternal, advice from Nkrumah to Lumumba, later published in the press, all stressed the need to consolidate power quickly, even ruthlessly, before it was too late—advice which Lumumba ignored to his cost. The breakaway of Katanga is the typical neo-colonialist situation: Belgian financial circles, when their government was forced to grant political independence to the Congo, sought to perpetuate their profits and influence by backing Tshombe in his adventure, to the obvious detriment of the Congo as a whole. Nkrumah drew this moral in a speech to his parliament in August 1960.

> It would be a mistake to look upon the Congo as a case apart or to suppose that the basic conditions which have produced the present situation in the Congo do not in fact exist in one form or another throughout the whole continent of Africa. The problem of Africa is essentially bound up everywhere with a struggle between a ruling minority and the underprivileged and economically exploited majority . . . it is therefore no solution to the African problem for a colonial power to hand over authority to a small clique of African politicians who are not generally representative of the people from whom they have sprung. . . . Perhaps the greatest danger Africa faces today is Balkanization. The term "Balkanization" is particularly appropriate for describing this danger since it arises from the action of the ten Great Powers when they divided into a number of small and competing states the colonial possessions of the Turkish empire in Europe. At the very time when these powers were splitting up the Balkans in Europe into a number of states, they were also engaged in partitioning Africa among themselves. . . . The African struggle for independence and unity must begin with political union. A loose confederation of economic cooperation is deceptively time-delaying. . . . We must learn from history. The genius of the South American people has been to a considerable extent frustrated by the fact that when the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires dissolved they did

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not organize themselves into a United States of South America. When South America became free, the colonial states which acquired their independence were potentially as powerful as the United States in North America. Their failure to come together resulted in one part of the American continent developing at the expense of the other. Nevertheless, there is only one country in South America, namely Paraguay, which has a population of less than three million. At the moment, independent states in Africa are being established with populations of less than a million. . . . It has often been said that Africa is poor. What nonsense! It is the Africans who are impoverished by centuries of exploitation and domination. . . .

NKRUMAH'S CRITICS have little difficulty in picking holes in his doctrine. They point out that there is a difference between economic cooperation and neo-colonialism. Where is the neo-colonialism in the World Bank loan for Nkrumah's own Volta River hydroelectric project? Or in the commercial agreements France makes with her ex-territories, including such provisions as the purchase of Ivory Coast coffee above the market price?

In the Congo, Tshombe could argue that it was in the interests of the Katangans to continue to keep the benefits of their mineral wealth for themselves, together with political sovereignty, rather than have those benefits dissipated over the whole vast country, at the mercy of a distant regime whose economic intentions, under Lumumba, appeared vaguely alarming. The issue went as deep as nationalism itself: what constitutes a nation? Why the whole Congo, and not Katanga by itself? In this instance, Leopoldville seemed to have moral as well as constitutional right on its side, for had not the taxes of the whole Congo helped to build up the Katanga industries?

The thoughtful Pan-Africanist can also retort that economic agreements with the ex-colonial powers raise some long-term problems. While in the short run, any preferential offer for African primary produce, in return for privileged entry of European manufactures, appears advantageous, is this not inimical to prospects for future development? Does it not condemn Africa to remain a raw-material reservoir, forever at the mercy of her customers and their unpredictable commodity markets? Yet his objection to "alliances with rival powers outside" lays Nkrumah open to the counter-objection that he himself values his membership in the Commonwealth, both for reasons of personal prestige and for its implicit mutual security arrangement. Nor is Nkrumah himself anything like as radical in economic policy as his doctrine might suggest, or as a number of his colleagues would like him to be. Last summer, when he was abroad, his minister of trade prepared a comprehensive blueprint for total nationalization. Publication of the report caused a minor panic among expatriate business interests, and on his return Nkrumah was obliged to issue a categoric disclaimer. The same internal conflict was apparent in a recent gold-mining crisis: after a number of British-owned mines had been declared unprofitable, a bill was introduced which embodied the extraordinary doctrine that a richer company should subsidize a poorer one if it had the same board of directors, and that if one mine belonging to a group should have to close, the group might be compelled to surrender one or more of its profitable concessions. For good measure, terms of imprisonment were prescribed for the directors of a company which closed or flooded its mine without authority. Here again, Nkrumah appears to have asserted his personal authority, with an unexpected generous offer to buy out the unprofitable gold mines.

There is nothing against the letter of the Nkrumah doctrine in this economic moderation: all but the most extreme African regionalists concede that capitalist participation is essential in the build-up stage of the national economy. It can

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be overthrown later. The real objection to Nkrumaism is that while political union might be all right as an ideal, the time is not yet ripe. The outstanding spokesman for this point of view is the Ivory Coast's president, Felix Houphouet-Boigny, who complained recently that the unitarian tendency in Africa "never defines the exact content of that unity: whether it should extend from Bizerta [Tunisia] to the Cape [South Africa], whether it should be limited to Africa south of the Sahara, whether it should have a federal government and assembly, or a single government and parliament." The group of which he is an advocate "believes that unity is not for today, because it is very difficult to realize on the continental level, as shown by attempts made in Europe, Asia, and America." If African countries were "naive enough" to cut themselves off from the West, they would "in the long run be invaded by the Chinese, and Russia would impose Communism in our countries. We do not fear the West. Apart from Algeria and South Africa, which have important white minorities, the African states cannot say that we are invaded by the whites. Beginning with our independence, we can organize on the basis of friendship a cooperation profitable to all our countries which will protect freedom."

HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, a polished, urbane, and diplomatic former French cabinet minister, typifies the politician of French Africa. In their system of education the French made no distinction between Africa and the mother country. From the very first school year, the African child was taught a French syllabus, while the British-African child began his schooling in the vernacular. This, added to the greater racial reserve of the British, has resulted in a striking contrast: the French-speaking African intellectual today is not only more urbane, he is much freer from racial complexes. Houphouet-Boigny's political career has been far less clear-cut in direction than Nkrumah's. When France fell in 1940 and other politicians (including Senghor of Senegal and Olympio of Togo) were going to prison for Gaullism, Houphouet, then a traditional chief, declared for Vichy. After the war he allied his political cause with the Communists, as many another African nationalist has done, but later, when the Communists lost ground in the French Assembly, he shed them. Henceforward he moved rapidly into the position of Francophile moderate, a career which at one time culminated in his appointment as a minister of the cabinet.

In recent months, Houphouet's wheel has come full circle. Fifteen months ago he was still declaring that his country was not yet ready for independence: "perhaps my grandchildren. . . . " In continued argument with his political rival, Senghor, he favored a close federal relationship with France and was visibly annoyed when Senghor got complete independence for Senegal. But he saw which way the tide was turning and decided that the Ivory Coast and its three neighboring states should go one better: they insisted on independence first and agreement with France later on. Early this year the four Entente states—Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Upper Volta, and Niger—negotiated economic and military agreements with France (the terms have not been published at the time of writing); all indications are that they will be as liberal, as advantageous to their economies, and as compatible with sovereignty, as were those France signed with Senegal. Today, the Ivory Coast's capital, Abidjan, is the West African town perhaps least changed in spirit by the advent of independence: French civil servants and French business still dominate, the latter in an optimistic and expansionist mood. Visited after the austerities of Sekoú Touré's capital, Conakry, Abidjan seems like an Eldorado; after the frenzied ideologies and intense political activity of Nkrumah's Accra, it seems like a haven of conservatism. Yet Houphouet-Boigny is as much an auto-

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crat in his country and as devoted an African nationalist as Nkrumah in Ghana and Sékou Touré in Guinea. His is a different response to the same basic challenge.

BENEATH THESE CONFLICTS and uncertainties lies an issue which goes deeper than politics or economics: what is the real nature of African society and culture, and what should be its underlying ideals? In the absence of any substantial body of knowledge or theory on this question, there is a disturbingly vacuous and anchorless quality in serious discussions among African intellectuals. A series of cultural conferences, of which the most recent was held at Ibadan, Nigeria, last December, has tried to establish common denominators among the many varieties of African culture. This preoccupation is Pan-Africanist in spirit, but it goes deeper than the mere politics of the movement. Indeed Africa's cultural pundits are rarely followers of Nkrumah.

The beginnings of African self-consciousness coincided with the beginnings of Pan-Africanism as a movement—when a West Indian barrister by the name of Henry Sylvester-Williams called the first Pan-African Conference in 1900 to protest against "British imperialism." Pan-Africanism began as a Negro rather than an African movement, for its father was the American Negro leader Dr. William du Bois, who founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909. But the enthusiasm of the American Negroes for what du Bois called "the curiously strong brotherhood of Negro blood" was not aroused, and the movement soon lost its trans-Atlantic character. Since the 1914–1918 war its cultural section has tended to have its headquarters in Paris, around a group of French-speaking African intellectuals who in 1947 founded the review *Présence Africaine*. They evolved the concept of *Negritude* which (in the words of the Madagascar poet and minister, M. J. Rabemananjara) "has helped us to combat the process of depersonalization of which the Africans have been victims. . . . While it is difficult to sum up in a few words what exactly the values of *Negritude* are, we can say in general that there is such a thing as an African existence, an African manner of thinking and feeling, and thus there is an African culture which must now utilize modern methods of expression. Its affirmation will enrich world civilization."

The exponents of *Negritude* protest against the tendency of Western sociologists to regard African culture as something static, closed, and definitively arrested in its development. The African novelist Edouard Glissant complains that these researchers

> discovered Africa at a time when colonization, in uprooting the peoples whom it subjugated, had effectively arrested their cultural and social development. It is generally believed in Europe that colonization, because it seemed to introduce technical progress and European culture, and because it singled out certain elites, gave African society a beneficent shock. . . . In truth the opposite happened. The vast movement of communication which had been working throughout the continent, and which constituted our history, was stopped by the partitioning of Africa by the Western nations. The natural foundations of social life were destroyed; they were artificially replaced in the interests of a more complete exploitation, by means of laws and political institutions that did not correspond to the natural substratum of the colonized countries.

It will be seen in these remarks by Glissant, taken from a discussion reprinted in the March 27 issue of *Afrique Action,* that there is contradiction between the original denial that African culture had become fossilized and the subsequent complaint that it was stultified by the colonizers. This type of contradiction and uncertainty riddles the philosophy of *Negri-*

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tude. At the recent Ibadan conference, some of the English-speaking intellectuals (less doctrinaire and more pragmatic, after the British fashion) found little difficulty in poking some gentle fun at these earnest exponents of Africanism, with their impeccable French accents, French clothes, and—all too often—French addresses, and even French wives.

Some members of the movement, notably the Senegalese historian Alionne Diop, have developed comprehensive theories on the fundamental homogeneity of African culture. Diop argues that African peoples are indigenous to Africa—they were never invaders from elsewhere. A prehistoric migration of populations from South Africa peopled the Nile basin and provided the original inspiration for Egyptian civilization, which in turn inspired Western civilization. From this starting point—that Negro civilization predated European—he goes on to describe the medieval empires of Ghana and Mali, which thrived until their dismemberment in the 19th century as a result of European occupation. He also postulates a fundamental unity of African languages which persists today despite the adverse effects of colonization. Unfortunately Diop's work is a series of assertions backed by very little evidence. At the Ibadan conference, the consensus of opinion of the assembled intellectuals was that there was no generally acceptable definition of African culture. Dr. Ayo Ogunsheye, who as director of extra-mural studies at Ibadan University was host to the conference, actually sounded a warning against the promotion of a too facile myth of the "African personality." A Ghanaian sociologist now of Leyden University, Dr. Kofi Busia, denied the existence of an African "mystique" in art—a concept which had been forcefully promulgated by other delegates; for Dr. Busia, African art developed as a religious art in what was, sociologically speaking, a "sacred society"—that is, a society characterized by local tradition, a high degree of social conformity, reverence for the old, and the integration of religious activities into daily life. He saw the search for cultural identity as a result, on the one hand, of the humiliation felt by Africans through racial discrimination, and, on the other, of its use as a political unifier. He considered the "African personality" a myth, though possibly a necessary one at the present stage of development.

IF ON THE CULTURAL level Pan-Africanism tends to be diffuse, in its politics there is at present an apparent crystallization of two broad tendencies: the radical Pan-Africanists on the one hand and the slowgoing pragmatists on the other. Conference succeeds conference in ever more rapid succession, each still dominated by one or the other group. The first in the present series, the one which set the tone for the subsequent ones, was the All African Peoples' Conference at Accra in 1958: a meeting of delegates from sixty-two organizations, representing nationalist movements all over the continent, whether independent or not. In its uncompromising denunciations of imperialism and neocolonialism, in its mix-up of ideologies, in its arguments between the Africans and the Arabs on questions like Israel and Algeria, in its long series of resolutions on every burning topic of the hour, the conference set the atmosphere for an unbroken series of such meetings ever since. It is difficult to measure the truth of such claims as the one that the Accra conference helped to stimulate the December riots in the Congo which, in turn, led to Congolese independence. It always is difficult to assess the interplay of ideas and political acts, but it would probably be safe to say that the influence of conferences over the years since the first one has waned rather than increased. The pattern has become too familiar for maximum impact, and the growing homogeneity and cohesion of the rival groups has served as a reminder that these meetings do not represent the whole of Africa, but a minority of the smaller republics.

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The principal rival group, under the aegis of Houphouet-Boigny, practices Pan-Africanism of its own kind. Four of the states of what was once French West Africa—Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Upper Volta, and Niger—are grouped together in the Conseil de l'Entente, a kind of little commonwealth practicing a customs union, cultural and immigration agreements, and the holding of regular meetings to coordinate policy. As noted above, they have recently been negotiating commercial and defense agreements with France. They now form the nucleus of what has become known as the Brazzaville group, after a conference of twelve states held there last December.

The Brazzaville meeting was as airily talkative as the earlier Pan-Africanist ones; but it sowed the seeds of a more businesslike trend in initiating talks between their own leaders and the Algerians in an attempt to hasten negotiations for an end of the Algerian war, and it invited representatives of rival Congolese factions to attend. The trend has been continued, and the most recent meeting of the series, held at Yaounde in March, decided on a strictly practical three-point agenda: air communications in Africa; investments in African states; relations with the European Economic Community. The Brazzaville states are coming to regard themselves, not without justification, as the practical politicians, while the others merely speechify.

Outside of the Congo, Mali's experience most vividly illustrates the present dilemma of the new republics—the lure of East against West, the claims of politics against those of economics. In January 1959 the French territories of Senegal and Sudan gained their independence as the Federation of Mali, after having negotiated detailed agreements on future cooperation within the French Community. Nineteen months later, Africa witnessed an example of Pan-Africanism in reverse: after severe internal strain the Federation broke up into its two component parts. Behind the break lay many of the common problems of the new Africa: the clash of personalities, the conflict of ideologies, and the ugly problem—besetting Arab and African nationalisms alike, and laid bare in the Katanga situation—of fitting "haves" and "have nots" into a political union. Sudan, with its 3.7 million population, was larger than Senegal (with 2.3 million) but at the same time poorer. Its government, under a popular, ascetic Moslem ex-schoolteacher, Modibo Keita —who belonged to the radicals by temperament—was inspired more by Accra and Conakry than by Paris and Dakar, while Senghor's government of Senegal still looked to Paris for its economic and political inspiration. The rupture came finally amid great bitterness, each side feeling it had been betrayed by the other. Sudan, now calling itself the Republic of Mali, contracted out of the French Community—and overnight became a "key" state in Africa, open to the blandishments of East and West.

THAT WAS THE situation last November, when the writer visited Mali, to be told sadly by Modibo Keita that "Africans are not yet ripe for federations." For many weeks diplomats of East and West had been sitting in Bamako's Grand Hotel, eyeing each other warily. None had a definite plan, and most admitted in private that their chief function at this stage was to reconnoiter and make sure that "the other side" didn't get in too securely. The Americans in particular were anxious that Mali should not go the way of Guinea—that is, be driven unnecessarily into Russian arms by lack of timely aid from the West at the crucial moment. As for the Mali government, ensconced on the hill from which the French used to rule, it had a sincere and desperate determination to cooperate with everyone, and a nagging doubt that even the help of all put together, East and West, might not be enough to put Mali securely on her feet. The first fully-fledged embassy, apart from

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the French, was the West German. The Germans were after strictly commercial agreements, in particular for the supply of Mercedes-Benz trucks, since road transportation was the need of the hour in the newly landlocked economy. The Czechs had already signed an agreement which included, in addition to the normal technical aid, the possible erection of textile and oil factories. The Americans had also signed a tentative aid agreement, but they appeared chiefly bent on a massive psychological offensive. The same applied to the British and also the Israelis; the former had invited Modibo Keita to London, and the latter were generous with scholarships for students of all kinds—from medicine to rural economy. There were also Russian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Chinese, and Vietnamese exploratory missions. Finally, putting all else in the shade, Dr. Nkrumah arrived on a full-scale state visit.

Mali's immediate problem was quite simple: the break with Senegal had severed the railway line between Bamako and the Senegalese port of Dakar—through which 100,000 tons a year of groundnuts, cola nuts, and rice were exported. The eventual aim was that Conakry, 400 kilometers nearer than Dakar, should be the main outlet. But for the moment the railway was in a poor state, and plans for trade in that direction had to await the completion of Soviet plans to rebuild and extend the railway. In the meantime, the whole of Mali's foreign trade was carried on by road with the Ivory Coast, at prohibitive expense. The rupture with Senegal had been a political gesture that had cost dear. In the meantime it was France and France alone who paid the bills. Although after the break-up of the Federation, French technical aid had no legal basis, it was continuing nonetheless. France even paid the salaries of the army and police, and her contribution in technical, military, and administrative aid amounted to almost half the budget.

Hence, those people who expected a decisive Eastward turn after the rupture of the Federation were disappointed. Her president, Modibo Keita, professed to be in a mood to put progress at home before any kind of foreign adventure or entanglement. With the ruling parties of Ghana and Guinea, his UDS-RDA party was among the best organized in Africa, and on such occasions as the reception of Nkrumah, it showed an impressive spirit of enthusiasm—a boy scout rather than a totalitarian spirit. There will undoubtedly be technical progress in Mali, but it will be slow. She has no trump cards under the ground like Guinea's gold or Mauritania's iron ore, and geographically she is ill placed even to make profitable use of her groundnuts, cotton, rice, and cattle.

COMING DOWN TO EARTH is perhaps the most subtle and the most significant current trend in Africa. In spite of the apparent crystallization into argumentative camps and tendencies, into clients of East and West, into radicals and pragmatists, the realization is slowly gaining that such divisions are no longer entirely relevant. With the emergence of Nigeria, as yet committed to neither "camp," the postures of Nkrumah and Sékou Touré are bound to attract less attention. As the Algerian war enters its final stage and constitutional problems in British East and Central Africa come nearer to peaceful solution, the "colonialist" issue becomes less central. The new tendency is to think, as the "Brazzaville" powers have been doing at Yaounde, in terms of communications and common tariffs. It is significant of the new situation that Guinea, the stronghold in Africa of quasi-Communist ideas and institutions, has recently abolished its state trading organizations, on the ground that they made for bad distribution of goods. Touré has also disclosed recently that, in spite of the hordes of Eastern-bloc technicians which overrun his country, the bulk of its foreign trade is still with the West. There is emerging a maturer Africa, neither pro-Eastern nor pro-Western. It will, at last, be itself.

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EUGENE B. BOROWITZ

CRISIS THEOLOGY & THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

A DOZEN years have passed since Irving Kristol, in a savage critique of Milton Steinberg's *Basic Judaism,** sought to demonstrate that Jewish thought in America was powerless to answer the great questions—questions about man and his condition, about destiny and the meaning of history—that the war had raised in the troubled minds of so many intellectuals in the West. Kristol's article challenged Jewish thinkers to face these questions instead of taking refuge in the kind of calm, confident faith that he accused Milton Steinberg, and most American rabbis, of preaching. To this challenge a group of younger theologians —among them Emil Fackenheim and Will Herberg—soon responded, and for a time it seemed that a new Jewish theology—a theology concerned with the crisis of the age—was in process of being born. But the effort miscarried. Aside from a few articles and one book, perhaps two, the promise of these first few exciting efforts remained unfulfilled.

Now that over a decade has passed, it may be useful to ask why this new Jewish theology failed to develop. To do so we must return to Kristol's argument and set forth its basic thesis. What disturbed him was the relative indifference of American Judaism to the extent and complexity of the problem of sin. He wrote that "the spiritual distress of the modern world does not arise merely because man perversely chooses to do evil rather than good. If it were as uncomplicated as all that, present-day Judaism—even Rabbi Steinberg's Judaism—would have the answer right at hand. The horror that breathes into our faces is the realization that evil may come by doing good—not merely *intending* to do good, but *doing* it."

Jewish theology to be meaningful in the postwar world would have to speak to this problem—to man's talent for creating evil, to his capacity for deluding himself about the strength and subtlety of his evil inclination. Contemporary Jewish thinkers, of whom Steinberg was the most articulate, lacked the courage or the vision to see the problem, much less to provide the answers. Books, journals, and sermons seemed quite satisfied with the liberal formulas and melioristic illusions of the 30's. To read or hear them was to experience the eerie feeling that their authors had been suspended in time or that in their limited vision they had remained oblivious to what meanwhile had happened to mankind. Thus for men like Irving Kristol who were preoccupied with the ordeal of Western culture, a Judaism without an emphasis on the problem of sin was "still catastrophically narrow," and was characterized by "intellectual timidity, cultural immaturity." So went the appraisal and the challenge.

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* "How Basic is Basic Judaism?" COMMENTARY (January 1948).

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It is not difficult to recall the circumstances which engendered this troubled concern with religion and with its failure to take sufficient account of the realities of human evil. By 1948, the mood of which Kristol's article was only one of many expressions was already prominent in American Protestant circles which were experiencing the same disillusionment that their European colleagues had learned a war earlier. A few years before everything had seemed so clear. The professors had swept out the dead dogmas of tradition and had confidently pointed the way to a better world. The politicians, particularly the radicals, had been even more convinced that their revelation was truth. Political action, scientific investigation, man-for-himself—such notions became the Messianic hopes, the pseudo-religions, which were shattered by the realities of World War II and the cold war that succeeded it. Once these new idols had been discredited by the tragic complexities of what was now seen to be "the human condition," religion itself began to appear in a new role and to take on new meaning. If man could not play God successfully, then perhaps God was not dead. If man could not finally stand in effective judgment over his own pride and sinfulness, then God could and would—perhaps, indeed, had. To rebuild his life, to be true to his new view of history, postwar man needed to understand not only his limitations but also his profound capacity for evil even in the guise of doing good. And, with their continuing revelations of both democratic and Communist deceit and treachery, the years since World War II have but made the problem more pressingly relevant. As a result, the theology of sin—and related to it, the theology of the state and its functions, the theology of culture and of history—have continued to be central concerns of Western thought.

The impact of this vast change was felt with special power in the Jewish world, for the 30's had had a special significance for American Jews. They were the first years of rapid integration into American culture. Out of the ghetto neighborhoods had come great numbers of young adults intent on becoming true Americans and on making use of a freedom that had been won after long centuries of persecution. Their Jewish heritage, with its emphasis on intellect and self-assertion, also made the American opportunities for education and advancement particularly attractive. No liberal, scientific, or cultural movement was without its youthful Jewish zealots. No group should therefore have been more disillusioned by the experiences of the 40's or have been more attuned to the appeal made by Kristol's article.

YET the record of the 50's is clear. The prevalent mood of the Jewish community since World War II has not been one of concern with human sinfulness or with man's inability to transcend evil. It has not been characterized by resignation or despair. On the contrary, though the American Jew may be politically less naive, even to the point of near apathy, and though he may not be as trusting as he once was of those who have simple solutions for our society's ills—the dominant accent of his life is still his faith in the Good Deed.

Indeed, what stands out in a review of the life of American Jews during the 50's is not a mood of indecision or even hesitation, but a clear and simple knowledge of what they needed to do—and then did. Marriage, children, decent jobs, and homes —these often led them to new neighborhoods, or to communities which had not existed a few years before. There were no established institutions, no patterns of community life, waiting to receive them. Still, even in the presence of communal nothingness they knew what needed to be done. There must be Jewish schools for Jewish children, Jewish centers for Jewish youth, synagogues and temples for—of all people —them! There must be organized Jewish communities, if for no other reason than that they might work together to rescue

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brother Jews from refugee camps, from lands of oppression, or wherever they were in distress. And American Jews did what they could, from sending telegrams to running rummage sales, from attending mass meetings to offering quiet prayers to create, build, and maintain the State of Israel. It was not the Jewish professionals or the great national organizations which developed this attitude—though they often take credit for it. Their role, however significant, was shaped in response to a process that was already under way in the Jewish community. In short, without ever having to think about it, the masses of American Jewry emerged from World War II not with a sense of man's helplessness before the evil consequences of his well-intentioned behavior or of the powerlessness of his will before his own evil inclinations, but rather with what can legitimately be called an unshaken faith in man's capacity to know the righteous act and accomplish it successfully.

To be sure, one may condemn much of what American Jews have done in the past decade as merely the exuberant response of those newly admitted into the suburban middle class. Yet it seems to me that it is not middle-class morality so much as a history of commitment to the concept of *mitzvah* which has asserted itself in contemporary American Jewish life. *Chupah v'kiddushin, pru ur'vu, talmud torah, tz'dakah*—these and a hundred other commandments may be unacknowledged as such by the American Jew, but they still guide his life. He does not, of course, study the codes of Jewish law as his great-grandfather did, and he may even believe that they no longer have relevance. Nevertheless, it seems clear that centuries of Jewish devotion and observance have conditioned his psyche so thoroughly that virtually no amount of rebellion, flight, and camouflage has been able to purge him of the conviction that a man is capable both of knowing and doing the good. This conviction—which forms the very basis of Judaism and which is one of the main points on which Christianity split from its mother-religion—has continued to dominate the life of American Jewry in our day, despite wars, crises, and intellectual disillusion.

Starting with that faith — obscure though it may be—the "ordinary" American Jew has raised his own theological questions. Though he may not practice the *mitzvot* which one observes him practicing out of any conscious religious commitment, still the acts themselves lead him to inquiries about their origin, purpose, and authority. From within the Jewish community, from Jewish living and devotion, there has thus arisen a distinct and indigenous desire for theology—only this is for a theology of *mitzvah,* a rationale of the Jewish way of life and belief. Thus, first by the witness of its life and then by the questions which that life poses, American Jewry has in effect rejected the kind of question raised in Irving Kristol's article.

THIS is not to say that the problem of sin has disappeared from Jewish *intellectual* life. Along with the related questions of culture, the state, and history, it still comes before the handful of thinkers who take the discipline of theology seriously. Yet to expound a Jewish theology relevant to our day, one must decide whether to begin with the problem of sin or the value of *mitzvah.* In the one case, man's continued failure is taken as the basis of religious experience. In the other case, the need and the ability to do the righteous act become the concern in thought that they have previously been in life.

Contemporary Jewish thought in America, confronted by these two paths of theology, has chosen the latter, the one which has always been characteristic of Judaism. Traditionally it is Christianity which has been most preoccupied with the problem of sin, for to Christianity the most basic and overwhelming fact of human existence is man's sinfulness before God's law. Man,

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said St. Paul, cannot perform the Commandments though he exert himself to the fullest. Because man's will is corrupt, the Torah is inherently self-defeating: if anything, God's purpose in giving it was to prove that it was impossible to reach Him through merit. Salvation can only come to the unworthy sinner through God's grace, and even after the sinner has been redeemed, he continues to be dependent on divine grace for living the good life. In Christianity, then, first comes the theology of sin, then the theology of redemption, and finally the theology of justification and sanctification (the theology of righteous living).

Judaism has traditionally faced life from a different point of view. What has amazed the Jew, leaving him in awe and trembling, is his declared ability to know and to do a righteous act. That he, an ant, a grasshopper, is privileged to know God's will and to perform it; that he, a mote in the vastness of creation, is still by reason of this knowledge and this capacity "but little lower than God" (the Hebrew says *elohim*)—this has been the primary source of his religious inspiration. His Bible is filled not with philosophic disquisitions, with metaphysical analyses, but with laws and commandments, histories of how he lived under this regimen, and prophetic harangues that criticize his performance and refine his responsibilities. The vast libraries of rabbinic literature are not filled with guides to religious introspection, but rather seek to make ever clearer the details of the religiously responsible act. Even the medieval philosophers discuss the existence and attributes of God primarily as a basis for validating and authorizing the life of Torah.

Judaism knows sin and sinfulness, but understands them within the context of *mitzvah,* not vice-versa. When the Jew sins, he is not overwhelmed by the event, nor does he anticipate that God will be. The Jew knows that he is but an animal. Surely this cannot come as a surprise to God, his creator, who fashioned him of dust. Hence He will understand the lapse; and because what He wants, more than punishment, is the righteous act, He will allow man to turn from his evil and pursue righteousness again. Even in his sinfulness, the Jew does not simply wait for God to act. Even then, there is a *mitzvah* to perform. The Jew acts. He does *t'shuvah,* he turns his life to righteous living with an immediate act of repentance. And he knows his heartfelt turning to his maker will be accepted.

THUS it is not especially difficult to understand why the demand for a new Jewish theology, the Jewish theology of man's sinfulness, has had little effect. Instead there has been another concern, a concern which arose from within the Jewish community, based upon its commitments, and one which Judaism has always considered more elementary. To this theology of *mitzvah,* Jewish thinkers, particularly the younger ones, have increasingly given their attention. It is symptomatic that the articles by Emil Fackenheim which have appeared in COMMENTARY during the past twelve years have moved from the consideration of human limitations to the possibility in liberal Judaism for authoritative guidance of Jewish living. Fackenheim's intellectual odyssey is similar to that of most postwar Jewish theologians.

It would be premature to call this effort to articulate a theology of *mitzvah* a distinct school of thought. At the moment there is no book, personality, nor institution around which it might be organized (though it owes much to the writings of Franz Rosenszweig and Martin Buber). However, it has enlisted the interest of such diverse Jewish thinkers as Lou Silberman, Stephen Schwarzschild, Jacob J. Petuchowski, W. Gunther Plaut, Herschel Matt, Monford Harris, and Samuel Dresner; and the broad outlines of one emerging system can be sketched. This system might be called "Covenant Theology," for it rests upon a reaffirma-

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tion, in contemporary terms, of the Covenant of Sinai and its renewal during the centuries of prophetic leadership. It seeks to explore and understand the implications of defining religion as a covenant relation, and specifically to make manifest the nature and meaning of the Jewish Covenant with God.

Covenant Theology, then, understands Judaism in frankly existential terms. Judaism does not involve only a set of ideas, a concept of God, or even a set of practices. It is also a way of living one's life based on a relationship with God, a relationship in which the whole self is involved. But it is not simply the private faith of an individual. The Jew is the man who shares the common faith in the mutual promise existing between God and Israel—that is, the Jewish people as a whole. The Covenant was not made between one Jew and God, but between God and the entire House of Israel. The individual Jew shares in his people's relationship with God as a matter of birth. He may also share in it as a matter of will when he makes this historic Covenant the chief article of his faith.

The Covenant, begun with Abraham, sealed at Sinai, renewed a dozen times over through the prophets, and reaffirmed by succeeding generations of Jews, thus provides the base for the new theology. Under that Covenant the Jews have acknowledged *Adonai* alone as God and have pledged themselves to live by His law. Here the new theologians emphasize the *mitzvah,* for it is through this service, individually and communally, that Israel testifies to God's reality, nature, and existence through all of history. Israel will remain faithful to God and His service until all men come to know Him; that is, to live by His law. Israel does not believe that any other religion has been or would be able to carry out that function. And it believes that God will preserve and protect the Jewish people through all of history—though that care is not extended from the people as a whole to each Jewish family or individual, as we have so bitterly learned. And Israel knows that God will vindicate its striving on His behalf on the day when all men indeed do come to know Him.

THE central task of modern Judaism, according to this theology, is to win the conscious, willed loyalty of the modern Jew to the Covenant. Other generations could take the Jew's acceptance of the Covenant for granted. Yesterday's Jew grew up in a community which lived by it, and it so informed his personal and group life that he did not even have to articulate it. If he had begun to question it, the whole force of his intellectual orientation would have led him to a resolution. Today's Jew does not have the benefit of living and thinking within this pattern. If the Covenant is to bind his children and his children's children, he must come to accept it as his personal Covenant as well. By making it inform his life and the life of his family along with seeing that his children receive a proper Jewish education and encouraging them to marry within the religion—by living a life of Torah—he must work to insure that the Covenant will be transmitted to future generations.

In the eyes of the new theology, then, the modern Jew must be not only an ethical man, not only a religious man, but the man of the Covenant as well. He is a Jew because he affirms that Covenant and has made it the basis of his existence. Once he does so, his life becomes an effort to sanctify time, to redeem history through following the Commandments, by performing other righteous deeds. Each Commandment becomes a way not only to personal improvement and fulfillment, but also helps to satisfy his responsibility to God and to mankind. Similarly, in performing the *mitzvot* he makes his own life more holy and brings the world that much closer to the Kingdom of God. And as he becomes more observant, ethically as well as ritually, in his practical life as well as in study and prayer, he not only comes

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to know his God more intimately but speaks of Him to all mankind.

Moreover, the Covenant explains to him that great mystery of which he personally has been a witness and participant—Israel's continuing survival. Only twenty-five years ago, some Jews were calculating how soon American Jewry would disappear. Today they complain because education and observance do not go far enough, and their concern is that Judaism must become more profound. Having suffered the worst calamity the Covenant people has ever known, the House of Israel has responded with new will and determination. No answer is given by the "Covenant Theology" to why God demands such suffering from us under the Covenant, and it neither condones nor minimizes Jewish persecution. The new thinkers do, however, point to the fact that the ties which bind us one to another have not been broken by persecution and suffering, but continue to be strengthened in the course of meeting common Jewish problems. The creation of the State of Israel and its continuing survival, they affirm, is also moving evidence that the Covenant continues.

The specific details of what is meant by "God's law" will vary among Jewish groups. They do not differ over the abiding relation between God and Israel, but—as is traditional in Judaism—about Torah: that is, the specific ways through which the Covenant shall be made manifest in life. The Orthodox will insist that traditional Jewish law, subject to change only within carefully circumscribed limits, is the only authentic expression of the relationship. The Conservative will agree that the institution of law must continue but will insist that Jewish law has historically adapted itself to new circumstances, and that it contains within it all the necessary means for defining how one should live under the Covenant and still be part of American society. The Reformers will insist on the freedom of the individual to decide questions of ritual observance in terms of his conscience or his personal encounter with the divine. But just as the other groups will benefit by the emphasis in the new theology on God's role, so the Reform Jew will find that the role of Israel asserts itself more deeply in his consciousness. By seeing Judaism as the Covenant faith, he will regard it not as a private religion, but as one he shares with his people. Hence his right to decide what is Torah-for-him, which might lead to anarchy, will be expanded to what is Torah-for-him-as-a-member-of-the-Covenant-folk. From the point of view of Covenant Theology, then, what binds Jews together is far more important than what separates them. Their differences, particularly as modified by the role of the *mitzvah* in the lives of families and communities, become far more a matter of degree than of kind.

Understanding Judaism as a Covenant can also explain why modern Jews believe in the continuing worth of righteousness despite the ubiquity of sin. They know that religion always involves two partners, God and man. Jewish history has seen the doleful results of overemphasizing the role of either. The reliance upon God alone in times of oppression and persecution has often acted to reduce the role of *mitzvah*, to relieve the people of its responsibility to use its own powers for justice and peace. And the insistence upon man as the master of history explains the continuing stream of false Messiahs and of the spiritual ordeal which inevitably follows their exposure—for example, the prophets of social change and scientism of the 30's, followed by the despair of the 40's. It is true that despite our best efforts the Messianic era does not arrive. But we do not then conclude that it can never come. God, too, has a share in its coming, and in His own good time, if not our own, that great Messianic day will dawn. This sure faith that God stands with him in history can give the individual Jew the patience, the holy obstinacy, to endure and to act. God moves

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through history, working out His will for the creation, and man has the privilege of serving as His partner, though not as His surrogate.

Sin might destroy the Jewish will to act if the Jew believed that sin might destroy the Covenant, that it might nullify the relationship between God and man. But Judaism long ago affirmed that its Covenant was eternal—that is, unconditional. God may punish, exile, decimate Israel. Still the Covenant remains. The prophets may denounce Israel in His name, they may insist that He will render judgment upon it as upon any other sinful nation, and perhaps even more severely—still they do not say He will revoke His Covenant. Israel's obligations under that continuing Covenant are precisely what call forth the prophetic denunciation and the punishment of God.

The Jews, then, have traditionally rejected Paul's thesis that the Covenant is obsolete and that a new Covenant is required. The living reality of their relation with their God despite their failures, their experience of the response of their God to them in their sin, their trust that He has taken upon Himself part of the responsibility of history, all combine to bring them to assert faith in the Covenant despite their inability to fulfill it on their own.

THERE is much more to be said both about *mitzvah* and sin. Still in true Jewish fashion it is life which must strengthen and intensify theology, so that theology may in turn direct and order life. Only as American Jewry comes to live by the Covenant in a rapidly shifting culture can Jews determine its lasting significance for Judaism. But should that life of the Covenant become real and pervasive—whether in its rationalistic, humanistic, or existentialistic form —the foundation will have been laid for Jewish theology to reach out to the broader questions of culture, of the state, of the history of non-Jewish peoples. Until then the primary task of the Jewish thinker remains within the community of Israel. Some will still find this devotion to be as "catastrophically narrow" as Kristol did twelve years ago. But the Jew, the man who through the Covenant has survived the Hellenistic, Persian, Moorish cultures, and a dozen more—the man who, as it were, has survived the forces of history itself—will but marvel at such myopia. For in reaffirming the Covenant, in making it his own, in reestablishing his people's loyalty to it, the Jew enables himself and his people to transcend geography and politics, civilization and time.

And perhaps the greatest contribution Jews can make to Western culture is simply in living by the Covenant of their fathers, in patiently pursuing righteousness until God's kingdom comes. Western man reels between the poles of "forcing the end" and despairing of man's power. The people of Israel has in great part learned to avoid both evils. It knows its role in history as it knows God's. That it can affirm such faith in man and God, that it can continue to live by that faith, should be a source of continuing wonder for all mankind, and, hopefully, a spur to similar faith and action.

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ASIA: THE AMERICAN ALGERIA

HANS J. MORGENTHAU

This issue we inaugurate a bi-monthly department, "Public Affairs," in which HANS J. MORGENTHAU, *one of America's most eminent political thinkers, will discuss leading questions of present concern. Director of the University of Chicago's Center for the Study of American Foreign Policy, Professor Morgenthau has also served as consultant to the Department of State and, more recently, has been associated with the Washington Center of Foreign Policy Research. A frequent contributor to* COMMENTARY, *his many books include* Scientific Man Vs. Power Politics, The H-Bomb, In Defense of the National Interest, *and* Dilemmas of Politics. *His latest is* The Purpose of American Politics (*Knopf 1960*).

TWO GREAT ILLUSIONS have obscured for France the true nature of the Algerian problem. Their persistence has depleted the resources of France, contributed to the political and moral disintegration of France, and brought the nation to the verge of civil war. One illusion sees in Algeria just another French province, as integral a part of France as any other. The other illusion holds that the Algerian rebellion can be stamped out by military means. The illusory character of these beliefs is obvious to the outsider, but not to many intelligent Frenchmen. Nations, like men, need illusions to sustain them in their relations with themselves and their fellows, and most of the illusions are in the nature of foibles and, hence, do little harm. However, there are other illusions, such as the French ones about Algeria, which obscure a vital complex of a nation's concerns and confound its thoughts, corrupt its judgments, and misdirect its actions. They are the stuff catastrophe is made of.

It is not only France which suffers from illusions of this kind. America has them, too. What has happened in Laos allows us a glimpse into the nature of some of them. And it is probably the most dangerous of our illusions which the events in Laos have brought to the fore.

It is tempting to look at the Laotian debacle as an isolated instance of misfortune from which we must extricate ourselves as painlessly as possible. Thus we are relieved of the necessity to search in ourselves for the causes of our misfortune, to revise our ideas in the light of the facts of experience, and to adapt our actions to the objective conditions. In truth, what has happened in Laos is not a self-contained local defeat which must be regretted but can be forgotten. Rather it is the first and for the moment localized symptom of a disorder in our minds which, if it is not cured, is bound to bring forth more serious symptoms and will in the end bring us to the verge of a national catastrophe of one sort or another. The disorder consists in two illusory but strongly held beliefs: that the Communist threat outside Europe can be

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countered by military means, and that the Sino-Soviet empire can be contained within its present limits by surrounding its non-European periphery with local military strongholds.

The policy of containment was eminently successful in the area to which it was originally applied, that is, Europe. It was this success which led to its transformation into a general principle of American foreign policy. What has worked so well in Europe was expected to work as well at the periphery of the Sino-Soviet empire in Asia. It did not work as well. It could not have worked as well because containment as a general principle of policy derives from a dual misunderstanding. It misunderstands what made containment successful in Europe, and it misunderstands the nature of the threat containment is supposed to meet outside Europe. The Soviet Union has never been contained in Europe by the military forces which NATO could muster in Europe itself. That the Soviet Union was or could be so contained has been one of the abiding illusions which have confounded the policies of NATO. The Soviet Union has been contained by one thing and one thing alone: the nuclear power of the United States and the plausibility of its use.

THE United States built its containment policy outside Europe upon the mistaken assumption that as local forces were containing the Soviet Union in Europe, so local forces could contain Communism outside Europe. Thus the United States embarked upon a policy, for which John Foster Dulles bears the primary responsibility, of collecting allies and clients wherever it could find them at the periphery of the Sino-Soviet empire in order to build up their conventional military forces. Laos is part of that collection. However, military power—nuclear or conventional—is incapable of containing Communism outside Europe; for the primary threat Communism presents outside Europe is not military but consists in political penetration and subversion and the use of foreign aid and trade as instruments of an expansionist foreign policy. The build-up of local conventional forces is not only useless but counter-productive as an answer to this threat. Laos is a case in point.

When the Indochina war ended in 1954, the two northeastern provinces of Laos bordering on North Vietnam were under control of the Communist Pathet Lao. The Geneva conference of the same year envisioned Laos as a neutral state with the Pathet Lao being incorporated into the royal army. That army was to be trained by the French. When the French pulled out, they were replaced by American military personnel in civilian clothes. This personnel tried to create a "modern" Laotian army. Its effort was supported by a total of $310 million in foreign aid. The infusion of such an amount of money into a poor economy, whose annual consumptive capacity was estimated at $24 million at the most, thoroughly corrupted the Laotian elite and created the very conditions of conspicuous consumption, demoralization, and popular dissatisfaction, upon which Communism feeds. In a country whose main economic problem is agriculture, we spent in 1960 somewhat more than half a million dollars for agricultural aid! The administration of our economic aid to Laos has been marked by inefficiency, incompetence, and large-scale corruption on the part of our officials and American contractors. The June 16, 1959 report on United States Aid Operations in Laos by the Sub-Committee of the House of Representatives Committee on Government Operations reads like a detective story peopled by crooks and misfits against whom a very few honest and competent men never had a chance.

Despite this American policy which blindly played into the hands of the Communists, the design which the Geneva conference of 1954 had developed for Laos remained, however precariously, intact. The country remained for all practical purposes divided between the Pathet Lao and the royal government under Prince Souvanna Phouma. The relations between these two groups ranged from sporadic fighting to friendly cooperation. The high point of friendly cooperation was reached in 1958 when the Pathet Lao joined the royal government. At this point the tenuous fabric of Laotian politics came apart.

The United States withdrew its aid from the new government and brought about its downfall. It shifted its support from Prince Souvanna Phouma, whose policies had been pro-Western in fact and neutralist in aspira-

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tion, to a succession of inefficient and unpopular governments whose main claim to American support was their vociferous professions of anti-Communism and their attempts to suppress the Pathet Lao by violent means. The shift was in the main engineered by the CIA and opposed both by the State Department and even some of the CIA's own agents in the field. The shift resulted in a polarization of Laotian politics between anti-Communists and pro-Communists. Pro-Western neutralists, such as Prince Souvanna Phouma, and apolitical patriots, such as Captain Kong Le (who in 1960 staged a successful coup against the royal government), and all politically conscious elements not committed to the royal government, were now branded as pro-Communists and most of them became so in fact.

The attempt to replace a covertly pro-Western government with one which was openly so and had at its disposal an army trained and led by Americans, called forth a drastic reaction from the outside. While the clashes between the royal government and the Pathet Lao had been perfunctory and of a local nature up to 1960, the Pathet Lao now staged what amounted to a strategic offensive whose obvious goal was the conquest of Laos and the overthrow of the royal government. And while up to 1959 the Communist powers reacted with considerable restraint to the attempts to destroy the Pathet Lao and transform Laos into a Western military outpost, both North Vietnam and the Soviet Union now started in earnest to provide the Pathet Lao with supplies and technicians. As these lines are being written (early June), the Communist domination of Laos is virtually a foregone conclusion.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED in Laos has happened before and will happen again—in more important places and with more serious consequences—unless the underlying disorder in our thinking is removed. It happened before in China when we put our bets upon the most inefficient, corrupt, and unpopular group (hence the one most unlikely to succeed), allowed a one-time promising moderate group to fall by the wayside, and thereby actively promoted the polarization of Chinese politics between anti-Communists and Communists, which led to the latter's victory. The same pattern has emerged in South Vietnam and is in the process of emerging in Spain. In both countries, we have identified ourselves with a regime that suppresses the opposition and equates it with Communism. In consequence, the popular aspirations for change tend to flow into Communist channels. The opposition tends to live up to the Communist reputation bestowed upon it by the powers that be, and the same polarization of political life which we have noticed in Laos and in China in the last stages of the civil war is taking place in South Vietnam and Spain.

The United States has of course no longer any freedom of action once this polarization takes place. Yet it bears the responsibility of having contributed actively, if not decisively, to that polarization by supporting those groups whose anti-Communism seemed to be the most reliable and effective because they appeared to be most firmly committed to the defense of the status quo and most ruthless in that defense. Emphasis upon military aid is the appropriate practical concomitant of this conception of the political problem, and since military force is the last resort of decaying regimes, military aid becomes also a practical necessity.

The emphasis upon military aid is still further supported by the assumption that a revolutionary situation, likely to lead to civil war, in a country close to the periphery of the Sino-Soviet empire, was bound to be caused by Communist military intervention. Thus when the Laotian military disorders flared up in 1959 and 1960, our government assumed, and acted upon the assumption, that North Vietnamese units had entered Laos in force. This assumption, fostered by the royal government for obvious reasons, proved to be without foundation.

This emphasis upon military aid, to the detriment of economic assistance, is being nourished from still another root: the absence of a plausible and workable philosophy of economic aid. To improve the lot of the Laotian peasant—the main economic problem of Laos—through economic aid from the outside, requires a subtle understanding of alien economic conditions and a delicacy in social and political manpulation far beyond the ken of most of the administrators of foreign aid we have sent to Laos. It also requires awareness of the political context

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within which economic aid is supposed to operate. Where that context is blurred, as it has been in recent years in Laos, foreign aid loses its sense of direction. Considering these and other complexities of economic aid, it is infinitely simpler intellectually and more satisfying practically to concentrate upon the military sector. Any army can be expanded, trained, and supplied, and you can show the taxpayer by way of tangible results what he has got for his money. If the army is too big for the population to support, if its training is unsuited to the terrain in which it is likely to operate, if its build-up is politically counter-productive—all of which applies to the results of our military aid in Laos—Congress and the public at large are not likely to be aware of it.

A policy of military containment outside Europe is self-defeating in that it is a powerful factor in the expansion of what it intends to contain. Yet while in Europe our policy of containment has thus far not been put to the test because of the plausibility of the American atomic deterrent, it has been tested in Asia. It has unmistakably worked only in Korea, albeit at the cost of war, and for the time being in the straits of Taiwan. In Indochina it worked neither before 1945 nor does it work now. It is exactly this mixture of success and failure in the short run and the prospect of failure in the long run that threatens the United States with a catastrophe of one sort or another.

IN THE SHORT RUN, the inner weakness of our position in the territories of our Asian allies and clients has brought about the virtual loss of Laos, it acutely endangers South Vietnam, and threatens Iran; it may threaten other nations tomorrow. The administration has reconciled itself to the loss of Laos. Is it going to reconcile itself tomorrow to the loss of South Vietnam and the day after to that of Iran? If it does, it is likely to face a storm of indignation at home, and only a very courageous and farsighted President will be willing to face it. If the administration does not reconcile itself to further territorial losses to the Communists, it will be compelled to embark upon a policy of military intervention which can only have inconclusive results at best. Furthermore, insofar as that intervention takes place at the periphery of the Chinese empire, it is predicated upon the continuing military weakness of Communist China.

What contains China today is not the military power which the United States can muster in Laos, Thailand, South Vietnam, or Taiwan; what contains China is its own weakness. However, that weakness is likely to be replaced in the not too distant future by a strength which will make Communist China the foremost military power in Asia. When that moment comes, the policy of peripheral containment will be put to its crucial test and will face the United States on the grand scale with the choice between retreat and war—a choice which has faced us already on a very limited scale in Laos. That war will not be a jungle war but an all-out nuclear war. Once China has become militarily strong, it will be contained—if it can be contained at all—as is the Soviet Union today in Europe, only by the plausibility of the American nuclear deterrent. How great is that plausibility likely to be? And even if the Chinese government should consider it to be fully persuasive, how will it assess the damage it might suffer as over against that of the United States? It is upon calculations such as these, implicit in the policy of containment in Asia, that not only the success of that particular policy but the very fate of the United States may well depend.

It is disturbing that a policy which has such fateful implications is being pursued without an obvious regard for these implications. Some—myself included—have heard very influential and otherwise intelligent men, military and civilian, express opinions about our policy toward Communist China which, in their bland disregard of obvious facts and likely developments, were no less at odds with reality than the opinions of French generals and politicians who believe in the possibility of keeping Algeria French by military means. The very folly of trying to transform Laos into an American military stronghold at the borders of China without anticipating a reaction from across the border, points to a collective loss of the sense of reality.

Nor is that loss limited to officials of the government. The great mass of our people live in virtually total ignorance of the realities of the situation in Asia. Here looms the prospect of another catastrophe. The popu-

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lar assessment of America's position in the world is about ten years behind the times. The standards of judgment of the American people stem from the pre-atomic age and that short-lived period when the United States had an atomic monopoly. Nobody in authority has told us how radically the bipolarity of nuclear weapons has affected the position of the United States and how the further proliferation of nuclear weapons is likely to affect it, to what extent the commitments of the United States are out of tune with its power, and what changes in our thinking and actions are necessary to cope with the new conditions.

How will the American people react when they come face to face with the facts of life, not by way of a reasoned and authoritative presentation but through the unintelligible and, hence, misinterpreted experience of piecemeal reverses? The memory of McCarthyism should give us warning; and so should the political and moral devastation which France is suffering in consequence of its Algerian illusions. Yet as France owes its awakening from these illusions to the insight and courage of one man, so must America rely upon the mind and character of one man to awaken it from its Asian illusions. The President has a sacred duty to think deeply about these matters and, regardless of political risk, to speak with frankness.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR TODAY

LEO MARX

SOME SCHOLARS MAY have been aware of it for a few years, but most of us have only begun to recognize that we are entering a new phase in the study of the American past. I am not thinking about the picture-magazine cult of the Civil War, or *American Heritage,* or the increasingly self-conscious, reverential tone taken (at all levels of culture) toward our national greatness. What I have in mind is no doubt related to all these, but it is something different: it is a recent development, a new emphasis—perhaps *style* is the right word—in the serious, academic study of our nation's past. If I had to choose a single name for the emerging style it would be one of the following: documentary, objective, professional, organized, or official. Rather than fix it with a name, however, let me mention a few signs of its presence.

One of the more conspicuous signs is the current outpouring of fine, scholarly editions of American books. Step up to the "new book" shelf at the library and you are likely to find the latest volume—Volume XV—of *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson,* or the first volume of *The Early Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson* 1833–1836,* or a vast bibliography such as the impressive 1,193-page *Guide to the Study of the United States of America,*† a descriptive list of books "reflecting the development of American life and thought" separated into 32 categories, viz., Literature, Religion, Sports and Recreation, Music, General History, Society, and so on. If this mammoth volume with a gold eagle on its binding has an even more official look than the other books I have in mind, that is because it is got out by the General Reference and Bibliographical Division of the Library of Congress.

The organized, programmatic character of the new scholarship was most fully revealed by Dr. Philip M. Hamer at the last meeting of the American Historical Association. Not having heard Dr. Hamer's talk, I am relying upon a report that appeared on the first page of the New York *Times,* January 1, 1961, under the arresting headline: "All Records of Great Americans Are Being Unified for First Time." (It is striking how many features of the emerging style this headline manages to convey.) In his speech Dr. Hamer described a plan, or interlocking series of plans, to collect and make generally available most of the significant documents of American history. It is a remarkable program and, as Emerson would say, a sign of the times—affluent, conservative, and nationalistic times.

Today, in libraries across the land, teams of experts are busy gathering, collating, and annotating manuscripts. The whole apparatus of American Studies is being modernized. For example, the first guide to the location of all unpublished manuscripts and records in the United States—that is to say, potentially useful records—is just out.** Huge collections of documents are being pub-

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* Edited by Stephen E. Whicher and Robert E. Spiller. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 545 pp., $10.00.

† By Donald H. Mugridge and Blanche P. McCrum (prepared under the direction of Roy P. Basler). General Reference and Bibliography Division, Reference Department, Library of Congress, 1193 pp., $17.00.

**A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States. Edited by Philip M. Hamer. Yale University Press, 775 pp., $12.50.

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lished: the complete papers of the Continental Congress, all or almost all of our naval and maritime records, the papers related to the ratification of the Constitution, and one could go on. Other teams are busy putting the words of the fathers of the Republic in order. When their work is done we shall have monumental editions of a monumentality that is probably unmatched by any nation: 91 volumes of Adams Papers, 52 volumes of Jefferson Papers, 40 volumes of Franklin Papers, 22 volumes of Madison Papers, and, to be less specific, the collected papers of Hamilton, Jay, Calhoun, Clay, and Wilson. All told, hundreds of volumes are in preparation.

Nor is this all. A similar impulse has been at work on the humanistic and literary side of American Studies. As early as 1948 a distinguished "task force" of 55 scholars produced the 3-volume *Literary History of the United States.* Since then we have witnessed a veritable eruption of anthologies, bibliographies, compilations, guides, handbooks, and specialized journals aimed at the systematic study of American culture. New collected editions of the works of many American writers—Emily Dickinson, Jonathan Edwards, Emerson, Melville among others—recently have been or are about to be published. Under the imprint of the Belknap Press and the John Harvard Library of the Harvard University Press we are getting an unusual variety of scholarly editions of American books of every conceivable kind: aesthetic theory (J. J. Jarves's *The Art-Idea);* biography (Parson Weems's *Washington*); government reports (J. W. Powell's *Arid Region)*; journals (William Maclay's); letters (Lyman Beecher's); moral philosophy (Francis Wayland's influential text); novels of importance in literary history (Harold Frederic's *Damnation of Theron Ware*); political theory (Herbert Croly's *Promise of American Life*); religious tracts (C. G. Finney's *Lectures on Revivals*); scientific treatises (J. B. Stallo's *Modern Physics)*; travel memoirs (Timothy Dwight's *New England*); and dozens of others. The list includes many fascinating, out-of-the-way products of the national genius such as Ignatius Donnely's *Caesar's Column* and Edmund Ruffin's *Essay on Calcareous Manures.* It is obvious that a glorious new era in the documentation of our national culture has begun, and it would seem foolish to greet it with anything but gratitude.

And yet it is difficult to be consistent in our response to all this. To be sure, most of the documentary scholarship is first rate. Anyone concerned to have a more accurate and inclusive sense of America's past will welcome it with enthusiasm. It is a disgrace that we have had to wait so long for an authoritative American edition of Melville. We need all of these books, and no doubt we need a lot more of them. But we also need to recall that having the documents is only a preliminary phase of our work. Indeed, given the cautious, narrowly empirical temper of so many scholars these days, one cannot help wondering what we are going to do with all these splendid volumes. Are we gathering materials for a time capsule? —a new Alexandrian library?—or are we preparing the ground for a richer, and by that I mean a more imaginatively relevant, historical literature? The answer will depend, needless to say, on the kinds of scholars we encourage and reward.

RIGHT HERE WE COME to what is most disquieting about the latest phase in American Studies: a suspicion that the scholar-editor is in fact the type we encourage and reward beyond all others. Is it possible that he embodies our highest intellectual aspirations? Of course I realize that some scholars who do editorial work also do other things, and that a few adventurous young men are fighting their way out of graduate school. Nevertheless, there are good reasons for thinking of the scholar-editor as the emerging ideal type among professional "Americanists." Let me describe him and his work.

To begin with, he may well be a member of a team working on a large, expensive project subsidized by a private foundation or a philanthropically inclined corporation such as Time, Inc., or the New York *Times.* Often the government itself is in the background, in some obscure way directing and encouraging the project (I am paraphrasing Dr. Hamer) through the agency of the National Historical Publications Commission, a division of the federal General Services Administration. Although in recent years many scientists have become

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accustomed to working in this sort of institutional setting, it is something new for most humanists.

Indeed, the scientific aura surrounding our documentary scholarship may help to account for the vogue it enjoys. In many ways the scholar-editor's work is the nearest equivalent, within the humanities and "soft" social sciences, to certain kinds of scientific work. It is precise, neutral, and impersonal —even bureaucratic. We admire this kind of scholar for his self-effacing rigor and discipline. He is a true professional. If James Gould Cozzens were to write a novel about the academic world, he would be the hero. No taint of self-expression mars his "research." He keeps it as carefully insulated from his own vision of reality as any chemist.

It is easy to see why the scholar-editor enjoys the favor of foundation executives. Unlike many possible projects in history and the humanities, his sort of work is predictable, safe, and sound. No one is likely to be disturbed by the results. Here is a point, incidentally, that C. P. Snow misses in his "two cultures" approach to these matters. By posing a more or less symmetrical opposition between the two, Snow tends to ignore how deeply the attitudes and methods of the scientific culture have penetrated and in fact transformed parts of the other, literary or humanistic, culture. Today, in the humanities, we are threatened by an overemphasis upon "solid," empirical, or value-free research. It is especially important that we recognize this fact right now when the large private foundations, realizing that the sciences are amply supported by government funds, are turning their attention to the humanities.*

BUT IT WOULD be wrong to take a caricature of the humanist-as-technician to support a simple view, either negative or affirmative, of our documentary scholarship. As soon as we consider a specific example—say the new edition of Emerson's *Journals*† —a number of complications arise. In fact, the case of Emerson is revealing in two ways. For one thing, the new edition exhibits all the genuine advantages of the impeccable editorial style. Besides, it was Emerson who gave us our most eloquent statement of the scholar's duties in a democratic culture, and it is interesting to compare that ideal with current practice.

Anyone who examines this splendid first volume of Emerson's *Journals* (there will be 16 eventually) surely will be impressed by the enormous competence of Messrs. Gilman, Clark, Ferguson, and Davis. They are men of industry, learning, and skill. It is impossible to imagine a higher standard of editorial precision. Nor can there be any doubt that the professional character of their work has meant a net gain for the truth. As a matter of fact, the chief reason we need a new edition of the *Journals* is that the editors of the first version, Emerson's son and his nephew, were not trained professionals.

The difference between the two editions is instructive. Emerson's relatives, who brought out the original 10-volume edition between 1900 and 1914, had little sense of scholarly objectivity. In selecting from the 230-odd manuscript volumes, they took as their criterion the prevailing notion of the way a genteel man of letters *ought* to appear in public print. To protect Emerson's privacy and his reputation as an exemplar of "ideality," they omitted his acid opinions on friends, women, Unitarians, Negroes, and the Irish. If nowadays many Americans still think of Emerson as the apple-cheeked sage of Concord, spiritual cousin of those Brattle Street worthies they met in school books, then Edward Waldo (Emerson) and Waldo Emerson Forbes should get some of the credit. "Throughout the ten volumes," remark our editors about the work of their predecessors, "there floats the image of a nineteenth-century gentleman, consistently referred to, and virtually titled 'Mr. Emerson.' "

Now, in place of that illusory figure, Professor Gilman and his colleagues offer us the *real* Emerson. By printing almost all of the journals and notebooks, roughly three

* In December, 1960, the Ford Foundation announced two grants to the American Council of Learned Societies: (1) a grant of $2,500,000 to strengthen teaching of American Studies in European universities; (2) a grant of $5,670,000 for research in the humanities.

† *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Volume I, 1819–1822.* Edited by William H. Gilman, George P. Clark, Alfred R. Ferguson, Merrell R. Davis. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 430 pp. (illustrated), $10.00.

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times as many words as before, they escape the distortion that came of having to make selections. Thus the first volume, covering Waldo's undergraduate years, includes his notes on college lectures, lists of titles, jokes, and petty cash records as well as journal entries. This high standard of comprehensiveness is characteristic of the new scholarship. The Jefferson *Papers,* for example, include letters to as well as from Jefferson. And wherever they find it necessary, Emerson's editors, like Jefferson's, provide elaborate notes illuminating obscure references.

Completeness and exactness are the twin ideals. No detail, as the saying goes, is too trivial for patient scrutiny. When the editors do not actually reproduce Waldo's doodling in the margins, they take great pain to describe it in words: "The hand sign points to the figure of a grim-faced man with feet like a trifid fish tail. Beside the man are the amputated feet in the mouth of a great fish, and the words, 'My feet . . . a fish!' Below the fish is some arithmetic in pencil." Where ink blots or deliberate cancellations obscure a passage of the Harvard sophomore's jottings, the editors resort to magnifying devices and high contrast photography. The result, they assure us, will be a "richer, deeper and earthier" image of Emerson.

They may be right, but it would be foolish to assume that the documentary truth, however complete or precise, will lead directly to a usable truth. My impression is that we have not yet assimilated the Emerson of factual record, so to speak, who has been available during most of this century. What is Emerson's present reputation among students of American culture? A check on the view of Emerson held by professors in our leading colleges and universities would, I am sure, reveal the wildest discrepancies. To some he is another woolly-headed Wordsworthian idealist; to others a profound forerunner of the symbolic philosophy of Cassirer and Langer; and all told there are probably a dozen more or less respectable Emersons in circulation right now. Not that such differences necessarily are a bad thing; they might be a good thing if they were argued, clarified, and defined. But that sort of exchange requires scholars who are more than experts, minds that meet on real issues and, in short, something like an intellectual community. Meanwhile, when a European scholar asks me to recommend a study of Emerson (as one did recently), I can give him a quick answer. What he wanted was a single, sound, all-around critical biography, one that would pull together the illuminating special studies by Matthiessen, Arvin, Whicher, Feidelson and others, hence reveal current thinking about a leading American writer, and all I could say was: no such book exists.

THE POINT IS that we are in danger of mistaking possession of the documents for possession of the past. This is where Emerson's own "theory of the scholar" comes in, for it turns upon the difference between facts and ideas. Indeed, he begins his career by repudiating a provincial culture that is timid, uncommitted, and on the whole excessively deferential toward the past, tradition, facts, whatever is given, especially the printed word. Here are the opening sentences of *Nature,* his first published work of significance:

> Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. . . . Why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe?

A year after *Nature* was published (1836), Emerson went back to Harvard to deliver his Phi Beta Kappa oration on "The American Scholar." In this address his chief concern is the loss we suffer with the increasing specialization of mental labor. It is predicated on a distinction between two modes of knowing. One we should call empirical—the gathering, classifying, and ordering of data within a carefully limited field. Nowhere does Emerson deprecate this kind of truth. But recognizing its growing ascendancy in an age of science and technology, he addresses himself to the need for the other kind. What worries him is the fate of ideas, ideas that embrace the whole man, or rather the whole of living, as we go on parceling out the responsibility for thought to teams of specialists. How can we maintain anything like a total vision of reality if we each devote ourselves to a minute portion of the whole? Who will put the pieces together?

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That responsibility, says Emerson, belongs to the true scholar, the "delegated intellect" of the community. (By now, of course, we use the word "scholar" almost exclusively to refer to the professional academic man, so that if Emerson were to give his talk today he doubtless would call it "The American Intellectual.") The scholar begins work where the expert stops. Seizing the data in his field, he endows it with meaning and value by framing it within the largest context, the most inclusive definition of reality, he can master. To do this, of course, he must know a great deal more than he can learn from books. His ideas will be shaped by his sense of man's place in the natural order, and by his activities as a citizen. The ideal Emersonian scholar, in today's idiom, would be the fully engaged intellectual.

If a good book is to be written about Emerson, it will have to be written by this kind of scholar. Only a man who is willing to range widely among general ideas—in philosophy, history, and literary criticism—could possibly write it. To be sure, he will rely on the work of our able documentary scholars. But no such book can be written from the bland, disengaged, "objective" point of view in academic favor. If the writer is to help us make up our minds about Emerson, he will have to make up his own mind on many complicated, controversial issues. He will set out to prove something. He will risk being wrong and perhaps even seeming a fool. Like Emerson himself. "Let us call him a fool," said Herman Melville after hearing Emerson speak, "then had I rather be a fool than a wise man.—I love all men who *dive*. Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to go downstairs five miles or more. . . ."

But then, someone is sure to ask, what happens to scholarly objectivity? On this delicate question Emerson is absolutely firm. So far as objectivity implies an escape from the issues of our own culture, or the possibility of a complete and dispassionate description of any facet of reality, it is a sterile ideal. "No man," he said in his essay on "Art," "can quite emancipate himself from his age and country, or produce a model in which the education, the religion, the politics, usages and arts of his times shall have no share." As soon as we move beyond the establishment of brute matters of fact, the desire for objectivity, like the desire for total originality, becomes a trap. In this Emerson anticipates our pragmatists. His knower is a man who establishes truth by surrounding an aspect of experience with a context—with ideas, and he forms the ideas in response to the choices offered by the age. Even if he wanted to he could not "wipe out of his work every trace of the thoughts amidst which it grew," and in any event, Emerson shrewdly observes, the "very avoidance betrays the usage he avoids."

To possess the past, in other words, the true scholar should attack it with questions arising from his sense of present realities—including political realities. Today there are some scholars, not many, who attempt historical explanations in this way. Among those working in American Studies, the most distinguished are Richard Chase, Richard Hofstadter, Perry Miller, David Potter, Henry Nash Smith, and C. Vann Woodward. In a recent article Professor Woodward reminds his fellow historians that the American past might look different if examined with an awareness of events in our time. He mentions, among other things, the revolution in military technology and the sudden disappearance of the free military security which this nation has taken for granted during most of its history (*American Historical Review,* October 1960). Emerson would have been sympathetic. In 1837 he invited American scholars to relate their thinking to the revolutionary spirit then rising in Europe. "If there is any period one would desire to be born in," he said, "is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side, and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old, can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era?"

BUT THEN, OF COURSE, we feel quite differently about our own age of revolution. How much our political anxieties have to do with the curious inwardness of so many academic disciplines these days it is impossible to say. But in a number of fields one senses a turning away from the world, an effort to make each subject as self-contained as possible. The literary critic insists that we read the poem *as a poem,* by which

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he means an almost autonomous structure of sounds and words. Is the econometrician doing the same sort of thing when he builds a hypothetical model? Or the analytic philosopher when he takes apart a statement which, he assures us, has a purely philosophical import? Or the abstract expressionist when he displays a canvas that refers to nothing but itself? Perhaps the fate of the human image in 20th-century art—first its fragmentation, then its obliteration—is our most vivid expression of the pervasive impulse to eliminate norms. It is as if we all wanted our work to be untranslatable—to have as little relevance as possible to that totality of consciousness we call culture.

How far can we go in this direction without hazard? This is essentially what was worrying Emerson in "The American Scholar," and the reason he began with the Platonic fable of One Man. According to the fable, as he tells it, a sense of the totality is the real fountain of a culture's power. In our industrial society, however, there is a danger that the power will be "so minutely subdivided and peddled out" that it will spill into drops that cannot be gathered. This is not to repudiate specialization, which is necessary and in fact desirable so long as society also preserves a conception of One Man, man as a whole, that is to say, a sense of community. To possess himself, Emerson asserts, the individual must now and then "return from his own labor to embrace all other laborers." Only the scholar, the true intellectual, can make this possible. It is his chief responsibility. If he fails, the culture dies.

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OBSERVATIONS

I JANE ADDAMS AND THE RADICAL IMPULSE

Staughton Lynd

THE IMPULSE TO RADICALISM has been getting a bad press. Students are being told that John Brown had "reasoning paranoia," that abolitionists and Progressives were middle-class men who felt their status threatened by centralized industrialism, that Populism was anti-Semitic and paranoid, that Woodrow Wilson's insistence on Article 10 was Presbyterian rigidity, and that when Jane Addams was a little girl she would get up in the night to tell her father she had told a lie. Indeed the scholars who are seeking to psychologize out of existence that radicalism which will not rest until, in Blake's words, "we build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land," the motive-changers who have occupied the temple of divine discontent, have made Jane Addams a principal exhibit in their collection of curious cases.

For Jane Addams had the temerity to proclaim, in an article written in 1893, that the settlement movement was as much a "subjective necessity" for its participants as it was an objective necessity for society as a whole. The physical segregation of rich and poor in our great cities, she wrote, impoverishes the children of the rich as well as the children of the poor. "It is inevitable," she said,

> that those who feel most keenly this insincerity and partial living should be our young people, our so-called educated young people who accomplish little toward the solution of this social problem, and who bear the brunt of being cultivated into unnourished, over-sensitive lives. They have been shut off from the common labor by which they live. . . . They feel a fatal want of harmony between their theory and their lives. . . . They hear constantly of the great social maladjustment, but no way is provided for them to change it, and their uselessness hangs about them heavily.

In this essay, as throughout her writings, Miss Addams pointed to the great unused motive of the desire to do good.

> I think it is hard for us to realize how seriously many of them are taking to the notion of human brotherhood, how eagerly they long to give tangible expression to the democratic ideal. . . . There is a heritage of noble obligation which young people accept and long to perpetuate. The desire for action, the wish to right wrong and alleviate suffering, haunts them daily. Society smiles at it indulgently instead of making it of value to itself.

It is easy to see how such a frank confession of personal need to do good by a do-gooder provides an opening for those who have been questioning the validity of radical action by exploring its psychic origins.

Thus Richard Hofstadter, in his brilliant and influential book, *The Age of Reform,* calls this essay by Jane Addams "fine," but puts it in the context of the Progressives' sense of guilt. The context, it seems to me, erodes the adjective. Does he mean to say that it was wrong or abnormal for a member of the urban middle class in 1900 (or for that matter, today) to feel guilt about living in comfort when millions of immigrant families battled tuberculosis and the sweatshop in filthy and overcrowded tenements? In some of the Mulberry Bend tenements, finally destroyed after a decade of agitation led by Jacob Riis, the infant death rate was one in five. What exactly is one meant to conclude about the reform activity of a John Brown, a Henry Demarest Lloyd, or a Jane Addams, when told that they suffered from a sense of guilt? It hardly "explains" the uniqueness of a Jane Addams. Social-psychological generalizations which may in some rough fashion explain the behavior of masses of men in conventional circumstances fall down just at that point where the radi-

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cal impulse comes into play: in unusual persons, and in circumstances which compel ordinary persons to improvise action to meet elemental needs.*

Another way to view Jane Addams's essay on "The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements" is to see in it the kind of mood which swept Russian youth in the last decades of the 19th century, the youth of Israel between the two World Wars, and the young people of Japan and of so many underdeveloped countries today. A mood, that is, which condemns the material exploitation and spiritual poverty of bourgeois society, and which strikes out desperately for an opposition way of life. In these youth movements one finds characteristically a mystique of the people and the land, a desire to go among common people, and by sharing their life to learn from them a simple intuitive wisdom. Characteristic above all of this mood and these movements is a relentless desire that the radical impulse shall find its outlet in action, that every detail of daily life be purged in its purifying fire: so girls cut their hair short, a brutal honesty is practiced in all the commonplace exchanges of the day, brilliant lawyers and doctors throw up their careers and take up manual labor. Whether of this century or the last, of the West or the East, Communists or Christians, these young people ask, in reality, one question: Is there then no longer a place for the totally committed life? Looking back twenty years later on her essay of 1893, Jane Addams noted that "all of the people whom I have recalled as the enthusiasts at that little conference [the gathering of settlement residents to which she read the essay] have remained attached to Settlements in actual residence for longer or shorter periods each year."

The first twenty years at Hull House (1890–1910) were an exciting time to be in Chicago. The Haymarket bombing (1886) and the great Pullman strike (1894) were landmarks of violence in a generation of chronic strife between capital and labor. John Peter Altgeld, governor of Illinois from 1892 to 1896, stated in his inaugural address that "There is at present neither Magna Charta nor Bill of Rights for the poor of our great cities," and worried lest government become "simply a convenient club for the use of the employer." The introduction of the secret ballot in 1891 gave new hope to political reformers. Dewey and Veblen at the University of Chicago, John R. Commons and Frederick Jackson Turner at Wisconsin, sent forth their students to do battle. Clarence Darrow in the law, Louis Sullivan in architecture, Carl Sandburg in poetry, all celebrated simplicity and the common man, as Chicago, the hog-butcher of the world, awoke to culture and to radicalism.

ONE HESITATES, of course, to call Jane Addams a "radical." Strange word, indeed, for that quiet lady whose first act at Hull House was organizing a circle to read George Eliot and who went to Halsted Street with the resolution not "to oppose or to antagonize any individual or set of people in the neighborhood." Strange word, too, for one who so largely shared the optimism of that pre-1914 world. So hard-bitten a critic as Henry Demarest Lloyd was writing in those days that "we can travel from smile to smile all the way around the globe. . . . Terror after terror disappears. . . . The terror of being found reading the Bible, of having your child torn away from your arms to be sold into slavery—a whole brood of terrors have evacuated the human mind forever." William Jennings Bryan observed in 1912 that "there is not a land upon God's footstool in which the power of the people

*Consider for example the following characterizations of "The Progressive Profile": "Worship of the unfettered individual, the strong pride of self, the strain of ambition, and the almost compulsive desire for power ran through progressive rhetoric like a theme in a symphony. . . . It is also probable that as the Protestant upper middle class lost its mystical religion, it compensated by more fiercely adhering to the Protestant ethic. . . . The idea that value was created only by the production of things or in rendering service, and that there was something dishonest in making money on other men's products, was an old American one. In part it stemmed from religious origins, in part from an unsophisticated system of agrarian economics. . . . Emotionally attached to the individual as a causative force and to an older America where he saw his group supreme, assaulted economically and socially from above and below, and yet eager for the wealth and power that flowed from the new collectivism, the progressive was at once nostalgic, envious, fearful, and yet confident about the future."—George Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt, 1900–1912* (New York, 1958), pp. 88, 94, 97, 103. This is over-interpretation run amok.

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is not growing; not a country on earth where the forces of privilege are not retreating." Particularly in her more abstract passages, Jane Addams shared this bland belief that what she called "kindly Time in its amplitude" could right all wrongs.

But as World War I was to show, Miss Addams was a great deal more than a practicing Victorian optimist. She had a Dostoevskian faithfulness in seeing the truth of individual despair in its every detail. In the *Centennial Reader** of her writings, the essay on "The Devil Baby" is incomparable for this kind of insight. In 1912 a rumor spread suddenly in the Hull House neighborhood that the Devil had sired a baby, and that the baby was at Hull House. Streams of visitors inundated the Settlement, demanding to see the Devil Baby. Anyone but Miss Addams, no doubt, would have found this infinitely annoying and left it at that. She perceived, however, that for the old women who made many practical sacrifices to come see the Devil Baby, the existence of that baby was a kind of confirmation that there was, after all, a moral order in the world, that somewhere and somehow there would be a redemption for the beatings by drunken husbands, desertions by ungrateful children, the drab and grating poverty of their years. These old ladies refused to believe that the Devil Baby was not real.

"I listened," Miss Addams relates, "to many tragic reminiscences from the visiting women; of premature births, 'because he kicked me in the side'; of children maimed and burnt because 'I had no one to leave them with when I went to work'; women had seen the tender flesh of little growing bodies given over to death because 'he wouldn't let me send for the doctor,' or because 'there was no money to pay for the medicine'." But what she found hardest to bear was the visit to a bed-ridden old woman of the neighborhood "who had doggedly refused to believe that there was no Devil Baby at Hull House, unless 'herself' came and told her so." Jane Addams tells:

> As I walked along the street, and even as I went up the ramshackle outside stairway of the rear tenement and through the dark corridor to the "second floor back" where she lay in her untidy bed, I was assailed by a veritable temptation to give her a full description of the Devil Baby. . . . I was still arguing the case with myself when I stood on the threshold of her room and caught the indomitable gleam of her eye, fairly daring me to deny the existence of the Devil Baby, her slack dropsical body so responding to her overpowering excitement that for the moment she looked positively menacing.
>
> But, as in the case of many another weak soul, the decision was taken out of my hands, my very hesitation was enough, for the bearer of a magic tale never stands dawdling on the doorstep. Slowly the gleam died out of the expectant old eyes, the erect shoulders sagged and pulled forward, and I saw only too plainly that the poor old woman had accepted one more disappointment in a life already overflowing with them.

WE LIKE TO THINK of the early social worker going about in high collar or flowing dress, indoctrinating the immigrant with middle-class values. But it was just because Jane Addams "projected her values," because she thought Aeschylus and Shakespeare were for all mankind and expected her neighbors to enjoy them, that she could see the spiritual as well as material impoverishment of the immigrant. Marx speaks of capitalism tearing off every veil and reducing every spiritual quality to a cash value. Miss Addams tells:

> A Greek was much surprised to see a photograph of the Acropolis at Hull House because he had lived in Chicago for thirteen years and had never before met any Americans who knew about this foremost glory of the world. Before he left Greece he had imagined that Americans would be most eager to see pictures of Athens, and as he was a graduate of a school of technology, he had prepared a book of colored drawings and . . . photographs which he was sure Americans would enjoy. But although from his fruit stand near one of the large railroad stations he had conversed with many Americans and had often tried to lead the conversation back to ancient Greece, no one had responded.

Miss Addams's fidelity to the particular does not falter when it is she herself, rather than society, that is exposed thereby. During the depression of the 1890's, Hull House

**Jane Addams, A Centennial Reader,* edited by Emily Cooper Johnson (Macmillan, 330 pp., $6.00).

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succeeded in having established a public works project on the Chicago canal to give work to the unemployed. A shipping clerk whom Jane Addams had known for a long time lost his job and came to Hull House for help. She advised him to seek work on the canal before applying for direct aid. He replied that he had always worked indoors and could not endure outside work in the winter, but when she insisted, he went away. He worked on the canal two days, contracted pneumonia, and died a week later. Thus Miss Addams learned "that life cannot be administered by definite rules and regulations; that wisdom to deal with a man's difficulties comes only through some knowledge of his life and habits as a whole."

Again:

> The most poignant moment during the [First World] war and the preparations for it, so far as I . . . was concerned, came upon me suddenly one morning. . . . The room that morning was being used to register men for the draft. In they came somewhat heavily, one man after another, most of them South Italians. I knew many of them had come to this country seeking freedom from military service. . . . The line of dull workmen seemed to me to represent the final frontier of the hopes of their kind, the traditional belief in America as a refuge had come to an end and there was no spot on the surface of the earth to which they might flee for security. . . . I said nothing beyond the morning's greeting, but one of the men stopped to speak to me. He had been in the Hull House citizenship classes, and only a few months before I had delivered a little address to those of the class who had received their first papers, combining congratulations with a welcome into the citizenship of the United States. The new citizen turned to me and spoke from the bitterness of his heart: "I really have you to thank if I am sent over to Europe to fight. . . . If I hadn't my papers now I would be exempted."

Life at Hull House brought another lesson: that the perception, however sensitive, and the action, however arduous, of the single individual, were not enough. "One of the first lessons we learned at Hull House was that private beneficence is totally inadequate to deal with the vast numbers of the city's disinherited." Out from Hull House and its sister Settlements marched Florence Kelley, Frances Perkins, and other pioneer statisticians to prove before the bar of public opinion the scope and exact proportions of their society's sickness.

Here the lack of radicalism of Miss Addams and her associates, in the sense of their lack of alienation, helped them. They took it for granted that facts, properly collected and presented to a candid world, would carry conviction. They did not, like so many later radicals, assume that those who disagreed could not be saved. Rather, they imagined that well-intentioned persons could fail to see the need for legislation to prohibit child labor or condemn tenements only because they were not informed. Essentially they were right: in 1908 Brandeis secured Supreme Court approval for an Oregon law regulating the conditions of women's work with a brief which contained three pages of law and over one-hundred pages of statistics. The dam had been broken, and for a generation social welfare legislation poured through the breach.

Indeed, until the First World War, Jane Addams was a radical only in her utter readiness to act on her convictions and to confront the world's evil face to face. Before 1914, as she wrote later, "my temperament and habit had always kept me rather in the middle of the road; in politics as well as social reform I had been for 'the best possible.' But now I was pushed far toward the left on the subject of the war and I became gradually convinced that in order to make the position of the pacifist clear it was perhaps necessary that at least a small number of us should be forced into an unequivocal position."

In these years Miss Addams became intimate with that deeper sense of separation from which the radical suffers, and learned to endure the most difficult burden, the fear that one's convictions may, after all, be ridiculous. "We were," Jane Addams recollected,

> always afraid of fanaticism, of preferring a consistency of theory to the conscientious recognition of the social situation, of a failure to meet life in the temper of a practical person. Every student of our time had become more or less a disciple of pragmatism and its great teachers in the United States had come out for the war

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and defended their positions with skill and philosophical acumen. There were moments when one longed desperately for reconciliation with one's friends and fellow citizens; in the words of Amiel, "Not to remain at variance with existence but to reach that understanding of life which enables us at least to obtain forgiveness." Solitude has always had its demons, harder to withstand than the snares of the world, and the unnatural desert into which the pacifist was summarily cast out seemed to be peopled with them. . . . The consciousness of spiritual alienation was lost only in moments of comradeship with the like minded.

But:

we stubbornly asked ourselves, what after all, has maintained the human race on this old globe despite all the calamities of nature and all the tragic failings of mankind, if not faith in new possibilities, and courage to advocate them. Doubtless many times these new possibilities were declared by a man who, quite unconscious of courage, bore the "sense of being an exile, a condemned criminal, a fugitive from mankind."

Miss Addams speaks eloquently for the modern man of faith, the man inwardly compelled to endure that for which he knows his faith to be inadequate. Certainly, she says, we "had none of the internal contentment of the doctrinaire, the ineffable solace of the self-righteous which was imputed to us. No one knew better than we how feeble and futile we were against the impregnable weight of public opinion, the appalling imperviousness, the coagulation of motives, the universal confusion of a world at war. . . . We were well aware that the modern liberal having come to conceive truth of a kind which must vindicate itself in practice, finds it hard to hold even a sincere and mature opinion which from the very nature of things can have no justification in works."

In the war, the cause of free speech which Jane Addams had always passionately upheld, took on new dimensions. "Organizations whose headquarters were constantly being raided brought us their libraries—pitiful little collections of battered books—to keep for them until the war was over. I always said that we would not hide them, but if they wanted to put the books in our open reading room we would be glad to lend them the use of our shelves."

One Sunday afternoon I received a call from a man from the Secret Service Department, who asked me if I knew that Bulgarian communists were holding a meeting in our largest public hall. I told him that I knew some Bulgarians were having a concert in Bowen Hall—what better could the "alien enemy" do, I queried, than to spend a Sunday afternoon in a decent place listening to good music. He replied that his orders were to arrest the leaders, and he went back to the hall for that purpose. He returned in an hour to say that he couldn't find the leading communists for no one had said a word, and because he was young and perplexed, he asked me what I would do in his place. I replied that I was afraid I should return to headquarters and resign because I happened to feel very strongly in regard to arresting people without warrants.

Social work, Miss Addams's chosen profession, likewise felt the strain. For a decade after 1919, she writes, "there is little doubt that social workers exhibited many symptoms of this panic and with a kind of protective instinct carefully avoided any identification with the phraseology of social reform." In fact the symptoms did not end in 1929. Many of the more broad-gauged social workers went into New Deal government work, and left their stamp on the relief, social security, and public housing programs of the 1930's. Miss Addams's successors today are not the career-men and executives of the social work profession, but groups such as the Catholic Workers, who, like Jane Addams, have simply gone to live in the slums, and the participants in the Southern sit-in movement.

THE HABIT has grown of regarding the pre-World War I radicals with condescension. Were they not moralistic? rigid? not really compassionate, but rather self-justificatory? ethnocentric? retrospective, rather than realistically accepting the modern centralized society? rhetorical rather than practical?—one has only to ask these questions to know the prevailing answers to them.

By contrast I would suggest that the very security and complacency which men before

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1914 could enjoy, made possible a degree of forthrightness, an air of storming heaven's gates, a tendency not to wilt under pressure, which is the precious legacy of that generation to ours. That earlier vintage radicalism saw itself not as a persecuted minority but as the voice of the people: in the minority, they thought, were the self-seeking men of power who resisted the changes for which the state of the nation cried aloud. Social revolution in their view was the fulfillment of the destiny of the American nation. Miss Addams's most striking quality was a penetrating naivety which expressed both the discontent of her generation, and its confidence that protest would be heard. In 1927, after the searing experience of pacifism, she could still tell a roomful of respectable lawyers and judges that "in every popular revolution the people begin their housecleaning by abolishing the courts."

All this made for what Jane Addams, in several of her last speeches, called "moral enterprise." There was nothing rhetorical about the radicalism of Henry Demarest Lloyd, who wrote in *Wealth Against Commonwealth* that "change of heart is no more redemption than hunger is dinner." Today especially, as we live under the shadow of those warlike emotions which always drive the dissenting voice to cover, we could do worse than go back to such as William Jennings Bryan, who reverenced Tolstoy and resigned as Secretary of State to protest Wilson's drift toward war; to Robert LaFollette, who sat with folded arms while Congress applauded Wilson's war message in April 1917; and to Jane Addams, who found herself a "dangerous radical" when during wartime she continued to preach the message of love learned on the streets of South Chicago. In the words of John Altgeld, "they stood erect and said to the Almighty, 'Here are our lives.'"

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II FASHIONS IN VULGARITY

Louis Kronenberger

NOTHING, IN A SENSE, seems easier to chronicle—perhaps in pictures alone—than a history of bad taste. The past is strewn with horrible examples, with McKinley-period offerings in architecture, with German beer-mug trophies in ornamentation. Every age yields fictional accounts of moneyed vulgarians—Trimalchio in ancient Rome, M. Jourdain in 17th-century France, the Veneerings in 19th-century England. Was "bad taste" ever more rife than among England's indigestible wedding cakes in stone? Yet was "vulgarity" ever more ridiculous than with Lord Chesterfield, who deemed it vulgar to laugh aloud?

But, though nothing seems more easily compiled than a chronicle of bad taste, nothing after a while calls out more for revision. Let fifty years go by, and it is not what the chronicler excoriated that seems vulgar, but what he extolled. In the early 1920's a critic of décor, championing functional furniture, might have whacked away at the curlicued accessories of his grandparents. Today all too many people wish their keepsakes had been kept, and shudder at the metal frames and tubular stems that passed for chairs and tables. Clearly, since taste began, one generation's fashion becomes the next generation's fright.

Hence, to just the degree that it proclaims What's Done and proscribes What Will Never Do, every catalogue of vulgarity is a comedy of over-assurance. The Augustans, while thinking it effeminate for men to use umbrellas, found it manly for them to carry muffs. The Victorians, while avoiding mention of illness and sex, doted on rancid practical jokes. Yet, even in the face of such warnings, we might try to discover vulgarity's least common denominator. From the past, we perhaps get a clue through its verbal alliances—"vulgar display," for example, or "vulgar presumption." Vulgar display brings to mind large overdressed Vic-

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torian families living in large overdecorated Victorian houses and seated—for hours—at large overloaded dinner tables. It also suggests the damage Mrs. Grundy did in the role of Emily Post. Respectable matrons dared not smoke cigarettes but could put away slice after slice of cake; or, forced to keep their bodies fully covered, they weighed them down with jewels.

"Vulgar presumption" has fallen into disuse, not because people have ceased to presume—quite the contrary—but because the phrase became a caste reproof. But of course the class bias went very deep, often literally to the roots of the word itself, to *vulgus* or the common people. Something was vulgar, in other words, that smacked of a lower class than one's own. This bias is not uninstructive, but today the connotations of vulgarity have not only overflowed class banks, they have been rechanneled in a quite different direction. Today we might even contend that it is *only* the common people—along with decidedly uncommon ones—who aren't vulgar. They may be coarse or crude, but the things they do that are most beyond the pale—belch or spit, eat with their knives or sleep in their underwear—don't fit our current sense of vulgar at all. It is crude to eat with your knife; what is vulgar is to drink tea with your little finger extended. It is disgusting to pick your teeth; what is vulgar is to use a gold toothpick. It is illiterate to say "ain't I"; what is vulgar is to say "aren't I." The common people aren't vulgar if only because they don't know enough, or care enough, to be.

It is among what once was termed their betters that vulgarity chiefly flourishes. We encounter it, I think, when a certain awareness has entered in, a certain conception—or misconception—of social or cultural or aesthetic rightness and wrong, together with a craving to seem right. Vulgarity thus involves self-interest or self-aggrandizement, an effort to falsify or floodlight one's standing or prestige, one's claims to birth or knowledge or refinement or taste. People are equally vulgar when, from a like motive, they refuse to do something. Leonard Lyons told of a Broadway figure who displayed a new gold cigarette case. "I'm sick of gold," he remarked. "What I'd really have liked was a platinum cigarette case; but my friends would have thought it was silver."

In its more innocuous forms, vulgarity is doubtless mere vanity—people's wanting to look their best, or better than their best. Cromwell may have exhorted the portraitist to paint him warts and all; most of us want the warts removed, and dimples added. In human, as opposed to artistic, terms vulgarity involves more than offending aesthetically, more than the pretentious or spurious in style or tone or form. Vulgar people often display perfect "form"—dress well, talk well, entertain smartly; in fact, the very point may be that as they grow outwardly more presentable, they get inwardly more insensitive. Or today they can be so poised and self-assured in their vulgarity as actually to flaunt it; a famous theater personage sent out, as a Christmas card, a picture of himself posing for a beer ad.

FOR VULGARITY DOESN'T stand still. There are fashions in it; it shifts ground, it shows progress, it sometimes moves up in the world. Its current manifestations suggest how strikingly today's world differs from that of a century and more ago: machinery and mass production, literacy and mass communication, democracy and relatively classless living, have proved banes and blessings both.

If we encounter less outright vulgarity today, there is in turn a kind of ubiquitous vulgarization. The old material display—the overmuch, the over-large, the over-stuffed, the over-shiny—has in great part been streamlined into submission; our material tastes have not only profited from the excesses of the past, they have been shaped by the exigencies of the present. What with a general lack of space today, and lack of servants; what with doctors and diets, the rise of sport and the decline of prudery, people now eat, dress, live, travel, entertain much more simply. Splashiness has grown curiously unchic. Most people tend to live like most other people, in a world of deep-freezes, dishwashers, casseroles, and baby sitters; and a man will very likely see the same dress on his secretary as on his wife. As almost no one today is as cultivated or high-bred as formerly, so almost no one is as benighted or boorish. And with so much social and cultural leveling off, vulgar display has steeply declined.

The new vulgarity, it seems to me, is dif-

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ferent. The old vulgarity followed that classic rule for the playwright: always show rather than tell. The vulgar used to show how grand they were by the size of their houses, the splendor of their furnishings, the snootiness of their butlers; by how they overdressed or overtipped—or simply overrode those about them. They never told you they were rich; they never had to.

Today the old stage formula has given way to a blunter means of proclaiming one's importance. Vulgarity has abandoned the playwright's method for the press agent's, self-display for self-advertisement. What is more, it is much less the business world that sets the pace in vulgarity than the world of Madison Avenue, of personalized journalism, of TV and Hollywood, of the "communication arts"—of the packagers of culture and the vocal chords of commerce. In that world—whose slogans sometimes actually become shibboleths—people, beyond frequently hiring paid publicists, distribute their own testimonials, write their own plugs, sing their own praises. And when not busy patting their own backs, they are slapping, or stabbing, other people's. When they cannot command the limelight, they invade it. This, I need hardly say, is an age of name-dropping; and even more, an age of last-name-dropping, when on meeting a famous man of sixty, someone aged twenty-two straightway calls him Bill. And as the first name flourishes in speech, so the first person does in writing. Serious writers compose waggish pieces as a way of plugging their books. Columnists brag, when the most piffling news story breaks, how they had predicted it weeks—nay, months—before. Into the body of their newspaper stints people inject commercials about their TV appearances. When Mr. Mike Wallace interviews Martin Luther King, a large picture of King is flanked by a just-as-large picture of Wallace. Entertaining as a way of getting on in the world is scarcely new; but today, as a form of self-advancement in professional circles, it outdoes the crudest wining and dining of department-store buyers, the most shameless maneuvering of social climbers. There is a whole dramaturgy of expense-account hospitality, of blandly feeding the mouth that bites you, of striking up useful connections on sofas, of cooking up deals in the middle of dinner, of instant self-promotion along the lines of instant coffee. Even those hostesses who today are above the battle and imagine they are exhibiting lions, are merely racing rats.

HOWEVER APPALLING all this may seem, it may yet—when taken inside the framework of the age—be inevitable. What with ratings and samplings, what with press-agentry and polls, what with ruthless competition—and hence gnawing anxiety—at cultural no less than commercial levels, people who are supposed to be molding others must more and more push and promote themselves, make shop windows of their offices, make show windows of their homes, make bylines of their holidays, syndicate their honeymoons.

Furthermore, the whole technique of "informing" and "educating" mass audiences today tends to throw privacy to the winds and to make publicity, far from a reprehensible aspect of modern life, a greatly respected one. All kinds of bigwigs—including intellectual ones—submit, on all kinds of media, to all kinds of questions from all kinds of questioners. To use zoological terms once again—it gets harder and harder to use human ones—there is now, of course, as a vital part of the rat race, a kind of human horse show in which blue-ribboned personalities are trotted up and down, are photographed, interviewed, round-tabled, headlined, televised, shown endorsing things, christening things, attending things, or just being in the midst of things. For the amateur in all this, doubtless the appeal to vanity is enough. But for the professionals, all this—to be fair about it—is part of a fierce struggle not just to succeed but to survive. Unless their photographs constantly appear, they will quickly lose face; again and again and again they must jettison what is left of their taste to safeguard what is left of their talent. The professionals, in their glass houses, are throwing stones at one another and, on occasion, bombs. For big-name feuding is no longer mere internecine strife: the feuding today is a great spectator sport, and which of two feuders will come out ahead is on a par with which of two boxers will, or two football teams.

The worst part of all this is that it has *become* such a spectator sport. It was said long ago that evil communications corrupt

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good manners; it might be said more pertinently today that mass communications corrupt them—that we are all being gradually worn down, that without wanting or often being aware of it, we are acquiescing today in what twenty years ago would have appalled us. For today's vulgarity is far more contaminating to educated people, to a superior kind of people, than the old brand was: people who could never have been persuaded to overdress, or live ostentatiously, or become materialist status seekers, have become more and more reconciled to a loss of privacy, a lack of modesty, an acceptance of the self as a kind of public commodity. And how not, with the very air people breathe heavily commercialized, with the very lives they live everywhere treated as so much copy? Quite literally, it is the gossip columnist's business today to discuss what is none of his business. But that very statement may not seem valid much longer, or fails to seem so already. For we have entered in America on a new species of communism, a thoroughly capitalist communism, one that sanctions, and indeed exalts, private ownership of things—at the cost of decreeing public ownership of people. The State, oftener called the Public, has demanded the keys to our bedrooms, and a camera permit to all parts of our house; the right to attend not only our weddings but our lyings-in, and indeed to scrutinize and analyze and alter the blueprints of our futures and the floor plans of our lives.

Frequently, too, the click of cameras merges with the clink of silver. Have we so soon forgotten that while quiz programs flourished, school children spelled out, for thousands of dollars, words like *pharmaceutical*—while the sponsor was introducing words like *moisturize?* And had the quiz shows not expired through the crookedness of the programs, surely they would have eventually collapsed through the ever-mounting crassness of the audience. For already by the time of the scandals, the once so spectacular $64,000 questions had begun to seem mingy; where once one's eyes had popped at the take-home pay, one now merely shrugged or yawned. The stakes had to be steadily, and sensationally, boosted; and by now, surely, on just what make of revolver Lincoln had been killed with would have hung 100,000 shares of A. T. & T. or the tallest skyscraper in Toledo. But since money isn't everything, we have still that other very popular kind of quiz program where interviewers ask people, before many millions of listeners, the sort of questions that their closest friends would never ask them when alone.

IT IS PERFECTLY TRUE, of course, that it takes two to make up such interviews and that it takes millions, listening in, to make a go of them. Obviously, without people willing to be questioned and large audiences intent on the answers, there could be no such programs. But psychologically and sociologically, the allotment of blame is not so simple. With the person being interviewed, craving for the limelight may count for less than the fear that it will go elsewhere. And in an age where publicity has become respectable and where psychiatry has licensed every one to Tell All, fewer and fewer are those who will wish to say No. But what has happened to the performer is in the end less important than what has happened to the public. There is no need to talk cant: the average person, rather like the superior person, possesses curiosity and relishes gossip. But to argue that because most people have a touch of the Peeping Tom, it is their inquisitiveness that creates such programs, is pure peeping-tommyrot. For we bring up our children, we order our lives, we try to regulate our society on the contrary principle that our baser instincts should not be pandered to. Those who are most genuinely concerned for freedom of speech are not one whit less concerned for the right to privacy. Nor are such people misled by moral gimmicks—as when sensationalism appears, vigorously waving the banner of truth; or when psychiatry is piously invoked to chaperon smut. The motive of the scandal magazines and the career gossip-mongers is always clear: they may be corrupt, but they are not confusing. It is where the motive attempts a mask, it is where—at a higher cultural level—man's privacy is invaded on the pretext of a sociological search warrant, it is where the methods of Barnum seek acceptance in the name of Freud, that a more menacing vulgarization occurs. The claim that such practices will widen our horizons or will deepen our understanding can only threaten our cul-

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ture; and the fourteen-letter words about sex or perversion are corrupting as the four-letter words never were. Some of our columnist guides and TV mentors seem half the time like cultural marriage brokers, and as the progeny of what they mate, what sort of young will inhabit the world of tomorrow? For in time values not only get tarnished; they get squarely turned around. Take a most elementary example. A few years ago George S. Kaufman, by protesting that *Stille nacht* had become a mere Christmas TV commercial, aroused a storm of protest against himself. And when that happens, who shall argue that people can distinguish God from Mammon, or Christmas from a White Sale, or a complaint against vulgarity from vulgarity itself?

WE LIVE IN A WORLD where TV is now sovereign, is indeed so enthroned that 50,000,000 Americans sit bareheaded before it for hours, enduring blare for the sake of glare, and plagued by those powers behind the throne, the intrusive—and worse yet, the intimidated—sponsors. *Of course* there are good television programs; but sociologically that seems beside the point. The sociological crusher is that for vast numbers of people TV has become viciously habit-forming and brain-softening and taste-degrading; has altered for the worse—as no previous form of communication or entertainment could—the whole cultural climate of American life. Of its intrusive side—the hopeless vulgarity of the commercials; or of its intimidated side—the withdrawing of anything offered in the name of culture at the first whisper of "controversy"—enough has been said, if enough ever can be. But confining ourselves to what we are more immediately concerned with, privacy all too clearly was in sufficient danger before TV appeared; and TV has given it its death blow. And as all liking for privacy vanishes, all dislike of publicity must tend to vanish too. Men that one would have supposed had distinction are nowadays Men of Distinction by way of the ads. Indeed, the better known a man is for his taste or breeding or good character, the more he is sought out to sully or betray them. Virtue has become a big-board commodity; and one that can only triumph by perishing, or survive by seeming priggish. The vulgarity that went with a gorging of food and a greed for possessions was at any rate a material thing, a kind of bodily indulgence; and it could often be material taste on the way up. Today's dominant vulgarity betrays a kind of corruption of the mind, of moral taste on the way down. And when those who shape our manners send out their beer blurbs as Christmas cards, who shall dare boast that the vulgarity that once featured a clock planted in a Venus de Milo's belly has disappeared? Some of us might even put back the clock if we could.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER, *the noted theater critic and man of letters, is the author of* Company Manners, Marlborough's Duchess, *and many other books, including the recently published comic novel,* A Month of Sundays.

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CONTROVERSY

DETERRENCE

The following discussion between IRVING KRISTOL *and* H. STUART HUGHES *grew out of Mr. Hughes's article in our March issue, "The Strategy of Deterrence—A Dissenting Statement." Mr. Kristol, formerly of the staff of* COMMENTARY, *has also been co-editor of* Encounter *in London and editor of the* Reporter. *Mr. Hughes is professor of history at Harvard; his most recent book is* Contemporary Europe (*Prentice-Hall*).

Irving Kristol: Mr. Stuart Hughes's article is so vague on a couple of crucial points that it is almost impossible to determine whether or not one agrees with him. Specifically, I should like to ask him two questions:

(1) When he demands "the renunciation of thermonuclear deterrence as an instrument of national policy," is he referring to thermonuclear deterrence of thermonuclear attack, or to thermonuclear deterrence of any act of military aggression? In other words, is he calling for unilateral nuclear disarmament by the United States *or* for a reformulation of American policy to the effect that we shall not resort to atomic or nuclear weapons except in the extreme instance when they are being used against us? The first alternative strikes me as sterile: Mr. Hughes can have as much faith in Russian forebearance as he wishes—but is he willing to extend that faith to the Chinese, the Japanese, the Egyptians, the Moroccans, the Indonesians, etc., who will have their own nuclear weapons in years to come? The second alternative I would endorse; but this leads me to my next question.

(2) If we renounce the first use of atomic-nuclear weapons, reserving them only for deterring others from using these weapons against us, we clearly have to be better prepared than we are to fight "conventional" wars. After all, no change in American policy is going to cause national and civil conflicts to disappear from the world, nor is it less likely that we shall be involved in them. Will Mr. Hughes support universal military training, a larger standing army, and a larger defense budget for the United States? If so, his point of view is one that commends itself strongly to me, and I hope to others as well. If not, he is simply arguing the pacifist case without avowing it.

H. Stuart Hughes: I am grateful to Mr. Kristol's letter for obliging me to clarify one point in my article that has remained obscure to a number of readers. Indeed, until recently it was obscure to me. As I said in the article, we who have rejected deterrence have set forth on uncharted ground, and we have been obliged to feel our way slowly toward new and untested positions.

I advocate an abandonment of deterrence in *both* of Mr. Kristol's senses. I am in favor of unilateral disarmament—by stages, however, and with pauses to give our potential adversaries the opportunity to respond in kind. In short, I believe that we and our allies should eventually restrict our defense to conventional weapons alone.

George F. Kennan, on page 63 of his *Russia, the Atom, and the West,* has delineated in imaginative fashion the character of such a defense. He is speaking of the Western European continent, but I think that his principle can be extended to the defense of the West as a whole. If the continental nations were left to their own devices, he surmises, the problem of their defense "would be primarily one of the internal health and discipline of the respective national societies, and of the manner in which they were or-

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ganized to prevent the conquest and subjugation of their national life by unscrupulous and foreign-inspired minorities in their midst. What they need is a strategic doctrine addressed to this reality. Under such a doctrine, armed forces would indeed be needed; but I would suggest that as a general rule these forces might better be paramilitary ones, of a territorial-militia type, somewhat on the Swiss example, rather than regular military units on the World War II pattern. Their function should be primarily internal rather than external. It is on the front of police realities, not on regular military battlefields, that the threat of Russian Communism must primarily be met. The training of such forces ought to be such as to prepare them not only to offer whatever overt resistance might be possible to a foreign invader but also to constitute the core of a civil resistance movement on any territory that might be overrun by the enemy; and every forethought should be exercised to facilitate their assumption and execution of this role in the case of necessity."

THIS POSITION IS obviously not a pacifist one. But it represents a radical departure from current American military thinking. (Moreover, I should not want to make Ambassador Kennan responsible for an enormous extension of a suggestion he advanced rather tentatively more than three years ago in quite a different context; he may well disagree completely with what I am now proposing.) My proposal would involve a drastic reduction of our country's present overseas commitments. It would mean the liquidation of a number of our alliances. For it implies that we would come to the defense of *those nations alone which had sufficient social and political solidity* to organize and support a territorial-militia or guerrilla-resistance type defense—that is, those nations which, without necessarily conforming to *our* definition of democracy, were based on a strong enough bond of trust between government and people to hold out against trials and temptations of unprecedented magnitude.

Such "solid" nations include the whole of Western Europe (except Spain and Portugal), Western Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Israel, the Commonwealth (including as markedly differing societies as those of India and Australia), the Philippines, and several states of Latin America, most obviously Mexico, Brazil, and Uruguay. The list could doubtless be enlarged. I suggest that in the present weeks of general review of American foreign-policy commitments it would be helpful if the State Department were to re-examine all our alliances with some such criterion in mind.

* * *

Irving Kristol: I am prepared to resign myself to the fact that Stuart Hughes and I are in political disagreement. But it does bother me that I cannot understand the reasoning behind Mr. Hughes's point of view.

Mr. Hughes writes: "I am in favor of unilateral [nuclear] disarmament—by stages, however, and with pauses to give our potential adversaries the opportunity to respond in kind." And if they do not take advantage of this opportunity? I assume that Mr. Hughes would want us to continue disarming anyway. But why, then, bother with the qualifying phrases? If one is going to disarm, one may as well go about the business in as grand a style as possible. If the Russians (or Chinese or whoever) are going to be so moved as to follow us, surely they are more likely to be moved by an immediate and decisive action on our part than by a long drawn-out process, with all the chances for quibblings and misunderstandings it might give rise to?

Mr. Hughes further writes: "I believe that we and our allies should eventually restrict our defense to conventional weapons alone"—but he then calls for a *reduction* of Western conventional military strength through the conversion of our standing armies into para-military territorial militias! Once again, why bother? Why not simply disband the entire Western military force—i.e., disarm ourselves conventionally as well as atomically? If the Russians decide to conquer the West by force of conventional arms, they are not likely to be deterred by the spectacle of a dozen or so "Swiss militias" arrayed against them. Nor are they likely to be frightened by the threat of "civil resistance" in the occupied areas—they have had plenty of experience in handling *that* sort of thing in Eastern Europe. And if the Russians are (for reasons which may seem cogent to Mr.

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Hughes) utterly loath to take over Western Europe, these militias are *a fortiori* superfluous.

Mr. Hughes's "extension" of George F. Kennan's remarks about the uses of a territorial militia in Western Europe are misleading. Mr. Kennan believes that the Russians would not risk even a large-scale conventional war in order to conquer Western Europe; and I am inclined to think he is right. But he never said that Russia wouldn't accept Europe if it were proffered on a platter. Mr. Kennan's proposals for Western Europe were explicitly premised on (1) a successfully negotiated disengagement that would "neutralize" Central and part of Eastern Europe, as a buffer zone between NATO and the Soviet Union; and (2) a militarily strong United States that would deter the Russians from violating this neutrality.

Negotiated disengagement is one thing; unilateral disarmament is quite another. The only "act of faith" implied in the first is that Russia is sufficiently reasonable to return a *quid* for a *quo*. In the second case, which is Mr. Hughes's, the "act of faith" involves a blind reliance on the proposition that the Soviet Union will never seek to achieve any of its ends by military action—even if we create circumstances that guarantee the success of such action, and minimize its cost. I find this proposition incredible; and it is certain that no responsible Western statesman could ever subscribe to it.

I STRONGLY SUSPECT that Mr. Hughes is edging in the direction of a peculiarly vulgar kind of pacifism. The unstated logic of his view runs something like this:

(1) A war in which both sides were armed with thermonuclear bombs would be the worst evil, because it might well mean the extinction of the human race.

(2) Any conventional war could be converted into a nuclear war, given the technical resources of the protagonists.

(3) We have no way, at this time, of persuading our enemies to disarm.

(4) Therefore we should disarm unilaterally so that if we are attacked

a. we could not fight and would survive our defeat; or

b. we might be wiped out by the enemies' thermonuclear bombs but *they* at least would survive to perpetuate the human race.

The fault in this logic is that it sees the cold war as an ultimate stage in human history, and assumes that, if only we can get through it safely, we shall be on the other side of total destruction. This is an oddly short-sighted view for a historian to profess. Why should a Communist-dominated world be free from the threat of nuclear warfare? Does Mr. Hughes really believe that the Soviet Union would unilaterally disarm vis-à-vis the Chinese, or vice versa? Does Mr. Hughes really believe that, if this particular cold war were terminated, it would necessarily mean an end to all wars, for all time?

I should like to repeat—not that it will prevent me from being branded, in certain circles, as a "cold warrior"—that I am as alarmed as Mr. Hughes at the threat to humanity of thermonuclear war. That is why I advocate unilateral American renunciation of the first use of atomic weapons. But I do not believe we have reached that golden age in world history where force—or the threat of force—is less likely to be a factor in international affairs. And that is why I also advocate a rapid and substantial increase in our conventional military strength.

The cold war happens to be a reality, as well as a cliché. It is idle to try to allocate personal or national responsibility for it: one could with justice say that two hundred (or two thousand) years of Western and Russian and Chinese history are responsible for it. But there it is; and it is not going to be charmed away. All we can do, at this time, is to try to limit its damages and its dangers. And let us have no illusions: *whatever* foreign policy the United States adopts, the human race will henceforth live with the possibility of total annihilation hanging over its collective head.

I have stated my own position, which is that the United States should unilaterally renounce the first use of atomic or nuclear weapons. And I mean that renunciation to be unequivocal. I am perfectly willing to face the possibility that, in a contest limited to political and economic competition, or in an eventual war limited to conventional military weapons, we might be defeated. But I see no reason why we *need* be defeated, if we are really willing to mobilize

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our peoples for this contest. And, until this issue has been decided, or until we have successfully negotiated a disarmament or arms control agreement with the Communists, it would be foolish to abandon our own nuclear deterrent. I don't want to use the bomb first against anyone. But I don't want to tempt our enemies to use it first against us, either.

H. Stuart Hughes: I do not think my attitude is either as vulgar or as pacifist as Irving Kristol finds it to be. It is not as grand as his—it lacks style—it may be simple-minded—it doubtless has logical flaws. I am also quite ready to grant (as I did in my first letter) that it represents an unwarranted extension of George Kennan's thinking, and that it fails to cope with the possibilities of post-cold war annihilation (which seems to me a puzzle beyond solution at the present time).

What I cannot concede, however, is that my proposals offer something to our putative enemies "on a platter." I do not believe that our thermonuclear "deterrent" has deterred anybody from anything. What has given the Russians second thoughts about occupying Central and Western Europe has been the conviction that they would find themselves most unwelcome there. Nor do I agree that Soviet experience in Eastern Europe has been comparable to the sort of resistance a Communist take-over would encounter farther West. The present satellite area was occupied by the Russians under the peculiar circumstances of the breakup of the Nazi empire, when even societies like the Czech and East German—which alone conformed to my definition of "solid" nations—were too demoralized and disorganized to stand up against their fate.

I am far from sure that the policy I advocate would work. But I see no other recourse. Any alternative policy carries a greater threat than the danger it is designed to avert.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Symposium—II

To the Editor of Commentary:

May I as someone who would still fall into your category of the younger generation by the hairsbreadth of one year comment on the April symposium, "Jewishness and the Younger Intellectuals"? I think it fair to say that the large majority of the participants report that while they do not disidentify or seek to hide their Jewishness, they find little in it of positive value. Since Judaism is a religion, and most of the contributors are not religious, they are not Jews in any technical sense. Since anti-Semitism has declined greatly, they do not feel the need to identify as against the persecuting outgroup. And since as intellectuals of Jewish origin they feel that their ethnic-religious-cultural background has given them little that is unique, they see virtually no influence by Jewish culture on America. They also see little in the way of a special Jewish outlook on politics.

These attitudes shed some interesting and important light on the values of Jewish intellectuals. Yet there are various facts about the position of the Jew in America which must still be taken account of. In many ways, the American Jew—and for that matter the Jew in various other Western democratic countries—is still different from his Gentile fellows.

1. In spite of continuing anti-Semitic sentiment among significant groups in the country (most high-status clubs still bar Jews; there are important areas of the economy in which it is difficult for Jews to secure high employment), the Jews are the wealthiest ethno-religious group in the nation. Their rate of upward social mobility far exceeds that of other groups.

2. Elite colleges and professional schools which have been dropping the religious *numerus clausus* are aware that they may become predominantly Jewish institutions if they apply pure academic criteria in their admission policies. This is currently avoided by some of them through the maintenance of regional quotas. Jews still do inordinately well academically (holding all the conventional sociological categories constant).

3. Any list of top-flight scientists as ranked by their professional colleagues will produce a high proportion of Jews.

4. All the available evidence indicates that politically Jews remain disproportionately on the left. They vote from 75–85 per cent Democratic. Organizations like ADA contain a large proportion of Jews. Jewish money supports much of the civil rights activity in the country. To the extent that there are new or old, young or adult, radical movements remaining in America, these are again disproportionately Jewish in composition. The New York reform Democrats are heavily Jewish in their base, and so is New York's Liberal party.

5. Jews contribute a relatively larger proportion of their income to causes than do Gentiles. Much of this is to Jewish ones, like the UJA and Brandeis and Yeshiva Universities, but much also goes to general community institutions. John Gunther pointed out in *Inside USA* that a large part of community culture in the big cities of the United States is supported by heavy Jewish contributions. (In answer to your contributor who wondered what would disappear if the Jews disappeared, he might ask the fund raisers about symphonies, museums, universities, etc.)

6. The Jews provide a large share of the audience for community culture as well. . . . The New York *Times,* for example, relies on a heavy Jewish readership in the New York area as its main mass base.

7. As compared with non-Jews at the same income level, Jews are more likely to spend money in ways which make for an easier life, e.g. they will have more domestic service, they go on longer vacations, etc. They also read and buy more books.

8. On a less significant level, studies of the drinking habits of Americans all show that Jews both have low levels of alcoholism, and drink a lot less in general than do non-Jews; there is some evidence, however, that they have a higher rate of narcotics addiction.

9. As compared with non-Jews, Jews are much less likely to engage in religious activity, i.e., to attend services.

All these facts are irrelevant in one sense

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to the questions you asked your participants. Yet the participants themselves are a product of the Jewish milieu. And the very growth in numbers of Jewish intellectuals over the past two decades—as the barriers to attending the right schools and getting the right jobs have broken down—also testifies to the power of that vague something in the Jewish background which makes for achievement in the various fields of culture. . . . The aspirant Jewish intellectual sitting at the feet of a predominantly non-Jewish and, in fact, largely Christian culture in literature, painting, and music, finds that what he admires is mainly, even overwhelmingly, non-Jewish, and seeking to be at one with this larger culture, he comes to see his Jewishness as irrelevant, or as a handicap. Yet how many of us would be what we are or where we are if we came from non-Jewish families of similar socio-economic status?

I do not pretend to know how to define the quality or qualities in the Jewish background that produced your contributors. Whether they or their children marry Gentiles doesn't concern me. I am concerned, however, that these qualities be preserved—much as I am concerned that the qualities in the New England Unitarian and Congregationalist background that were so productive of intellectual talent at various periods of our history also be preserved and extended.

Obviously a religion cannot be maintained in order to produce scientists, writers, or readers of the New York *Times*. But all the signs indicate that the Jews will hang on in the United States as a religious denomination and an ethnic group for some time to come. Creative elites all through history have taken great interest in their backgrounds, in what their families were and are. It behooves creative American Jews to show a little of the same interest in the tradition which has sustained them that some of the Gentile intellectuals have felt for theirs.

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET
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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

There is a particular pathos in your symposium which disturbed me vastly more than the palpable ignorance of Judaism which it rather consistently displayed. The fact that Jews can be ignorant of Judaism would seem to reflect less upon the inner substance of Judaism than upon the possible mis-attribution of many of the contributors as either Jews or intellectuals. One doubts where they would write of the novel, politics, or anything else quite as personally, uncritically, or cavalierly. But this brings me to the particular pathos. It resembles what some contemporary philosophers have called the plight of historicity without transcendence—that is, mere being in the world, an accommodation to one's unavoidably finite and circumscribed situation, a taking of the world for what it is and then making do.

Most of the contributions, other than those which were aggressively hostile or simply innocent, betray a vivid sense of the human situation. This sense was often defined personally (the individual in reaction to the parodies of his environment—Jewish and general) or historically (the individual in reaction to the desperateness of the times and the presumed incapacity of the Jewish vision to address the times). But with few exceptions most of the contributors who limn their existential predicament leave it at precisely that—a sheer predicament for which not only Judaism, but really nothing else, avails. One comes away from this symposium, as one did not come away from the symposium in *The Contemporary Jewish Record* more than a decade ago, feeling that practically nothing is left but dried-up loyalties, fatuous nostalgias, or a tough to-hell-with-the-business of straightening out the world when there's a pretty girl to sleep with or a game at the Yankee Stadium. Despite Mr. Podhoretz's feeling that considerable idealistic espousal remains, all the gods appear now to be dead—not only the true one, but the false ones as well. We seem to be left—if we are to judge by this symposium—with something which is less than either paganism or idolatry—an annoyance, an intrusion, animal dissatisfaction, and weariness. If the questions the editor of COMMENTARY asked were so trivial, parochial, or beside-the-point, why did so many of the contributors bother to answer? Perhaps they answered because they wished to announce their difficulty, the fact that they *do* live in a world in which they believe nothing exists which commands transcending obligation or, which is less, even upsets or bothers them.

One cannot be angry with the symposium because it is probably an accurate version of the younger Jewish intellectuals and for that reason full of justice. It does make it rather difficult, however, for an apocalyptic messianist like myself. I feel rather foolish taking so many eccentric things seriously—

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however, on second thought, possibly only the prescience of the end of time and history (and with it getting up in the morning, Henry James, copulation, and jazz) might prove alarming to this generation.

ARTHUR A. COHEN

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I think that you did an outstanding service to the community by publishing the symposium. I know that a number of rabbis in this community were rudely jolted by the participants' answers—and rightly so. Our smug temple- and synagogue-goers and their leaders are so concerned and wrapped up in the frenetic drive toward bigger and better buildings that they have offered little that is attractive intellectually or spiritually to the young leaders and followers of our times. I agree that the organized religious structure has little to commend itself to this generation. Most Jewish activity can be reduced to the lowest common denominator of fund raising and more fund raising. The fire of prophetic Judaism, the emphasis on learning of rabbinic Judaism, have been smothered by the smooth "pretty boys" turned out by our seminaries. . . .

There are groups who are seriously concerned about the survival of our people, and although we may consider their ways and means strange and un-American, they are succeeding well in their small areas of endeavor. The Lubavitcher Hasidim (with whom I am not affiliated) and the various day school movements have produced graduates who are quite at home both in Judaistic and American values. . . . Almost all the products of this education have a positive feeling toward our tradition. The schools aim at producing learned laymen more than they aim to produce rabbis. A community based on learned businessmen, professionals, and working class has a better chance of survival than the temple crowd and country club set. . . .

STANLEY LEVIN

Baltimore, Md.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Just one comment on the liberalism that radiates from the pages of your symposium.

If it had come out during the war that Hitler was making Negroes push Jews into the gas chambers, I could well imagine the first reaction of all the Ned Polskys of this world would be that Negroes were being discriminated against.

Incidentally, I suspect that a similar symposium conducted among scientific intellectuals, particularly those in the physical sciences (of which there were no representatives in your symposium), would yield a far more sympathetic attitude toward Judaism.

BERTRAM KOSTANT

Department of Mathematics
University of California
Berkeley, Calif.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . If it is true, as you say in your Introduction, that "the best Jewish traditions are no longer the unique possession of the Jewish people," then how can one justify a symposium which discusses Jewishness solely in the context of persons who have experienced the religio-familism of Jewish life? Perhaps another symposium is called for, in which intellectuals are selected not on the basis solely of their religious background, but on the basis of their possession of "Jewish ideals." But how to find them? They are not marked off by the experience of Jewishness in the family and kin group; hence there is no built-in criterion. Many of them reject, as does Philip Roth, the "myth of Jesus as Christ"; and perhaps this might be used. Among other possible criteria are the rejection of American middle-class life and its standards; passionate adherence to the ideals of brotherhood, universal justice, communalism; the respect for learning and the cultivation of the individual intellect.

All of these things, for which I stand, appear in the symposium as definitions of the Jewish ideal. Yet I am not "Jewish". . . . My case is typical enough—most of my closest friends have been Jews; I have been an employee of academic departments of social science with a plurality or majority of Jews on their faculties; my most serious contemporary reading has often centered upon the works of the younger Jewish writers (who, incidentally, are preoccupied with the religio-familism of Jewish life); I subscribe to COMMENTARY. Yet in spite of all this identification and participation, I am not a "Jew" in the sense of the criterion by which the contributors to the symposium were selected. . . .

Are there perhaps two kinds of Jews: the familial Jews and the universal Jews? How do the familial-Jewish intellectuals regard their universal-Jewish colleagues? When and where are lines drawn? Should lines be drawn at all? Is the current tendency to revive Jewish rituals creating more identity problems than it solves? How can people become more Jewish religiously but less Jew-

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ish intellectually and socially at the same time? . . . The problem is severe enough for the Jew; it may come to be equally severe for the non-Jewish intellectuals who are "universal Jews," and who identify strongly with their familial-Jewish colleagues, but who, because of the ritual revival and identity-hunger, may be shut out of their society.

JOHN W. BENNETT
Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was fascinated by your symposium. . . . What struck me as of particular interest was the almost uniform lack of Jewish religious training each of these so-called intellectuals had received, as well as the very evident lack of a Jewish religious environment at home. . . . Having never taken the opportunity to study what they have rejected, how can they know the significance of what they now so boldly dismiss as being of little or no importance in their lives? . . .

SEYMOUR S. DETSKY
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The symposium is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the attitudes of younger Jewish writers, teachers, scientists, etc. It was imaginatively planned and ably executed. . . . From the vantage point of one who has spent thirty-six years in association with intellectuals and pseudo-intellectuals during their college experiences, I can vouch for its representative character. . . .

The Jewish community must reckon with the facts of the situation. These intellectuals, some poorly informed, some better grounded in Jewish lore and life, are concerned more with Jewish ethical values than with ritual and nationalism. The insights and courage of the prophet stir them more than the pleadings and scoldings of the Jewish survivalist or separatist. . . .

Understanding and patience are required if these creative spirits are not to be permanently alienated from Judaism. We must provide them during their adolescent years with a more effective and mature presentation of Jewish knowledge and attitudes. . . . This will be no parochial Judaism, but rather one in which its human and universal aspects will predominate.

ISIDOR B. HOFFMAN
Counselor to Jewish Students
Columbia University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After wading through the thirty-one contributions from the thirty-one "intellectuals" (and wading is a good description considering the shallowness involved), I can only say, "thank God." Thank God, that Judaism and things Jewish are not in the hands and at the mercy of these apologists. And at last I have come to understand the meaning of "Jewish intellectual." For me the term has taken on the nasty connotation of detachment and apartness—couched in long sentences. . . .

Having been hoary with age (thirty) when I received the Ph.D. (science), I cannot consider myself an intellectual; taking an active part in things Jewish, I cannot be a Jewish intellectual. . . . My comment, in a word, on this collection is "baloney"—kosher, of course.

(P.S. I heartily enjoy the magazine.)

MELVIN A. BENARDE
Chestertown, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One would suppose that by directing the questions of your April symposium to the younger Jewish intellectuals of America, the intention was to solicit a subjective response to these questions. . . . Otherwise, the questions, slightly reworded, could have—and perhaps should have—been directed to young Gentile intellectuals. With the exception of a handful of contributors, . . . most of the articles read like miniature sociological treatises. . . . I suspect a kind of collective conspiracy—probably unconscious—designed to avoid a personal confrontation. . . . What a deplorable waste of intellect and imagination is here involved, [and what a loss] of the marvelous potential of the whole idea. . . .

DAVID B. GOLDMAN
Brooklyn, N.Y.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

On reading your symposium one is impressed by (1) the shallowness and vagueness of the questions; and (2) the utter lack of Jewish knowledge displayed by most of the respondents. . . . If you don't tell us what "Jewishness" is, how can you ask questions about it? Also, how can one seriously consider answers about "Jewishness" from individuals who have, for the most part, only ignorance of Judaism or the Jewish past on which to base their conclusions?

(CHAPLAIN) MARTIN SIEGEL
Commission on Jewish Chaplaincy
National Jewish Welfare Board
New York City

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To the Editor of Commentary:

The younger intellectuals were really very distressing. Not so much because they were so uninvolved in Jewish life, but because of their terribly bored, oh so intellectual, emotionally empty reaction to Commentary's questions. I am afraid that their well-formed sentences and clique literary references did not hide the fact that they misunderstood much of what constitutes Jewish religion, and that many probably suffer from a touch of an old Jewish disease whose symptom is a sharp reduction in one's self-esteem.

Allen I. Rutchik

New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

Intellectual, intellectual quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With Zen, hip, and beat
Your writings are quite a treat.
Your search for the latest fad
Does not make me mad.
For your arrangement
Of words and phrases is often clever.
But you'll remain
A thing of beauty and a *goy* forever.

(Rabbi) Bernard S. Raskas

Temple of Aaron
St. Paul, Minnesota

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . I was surprised to find that some of your symposiasts answered the fifth question by admitting that they would not be concerned if their children apostatized. . . . I've been wondering if I missed the train somewhere, since it was difficult for me to realize that parents could be lacking, in a traditional sense, what I might call contemporary ancestorship; parents, though they are people, also have a special concern for their offspring and that concern usually expresses itself in some accordance with their traditional inheritance. . . . Wondering how I would have answered the questions if I were asked, it was brought home to me that my background is probably unique as a Jewess in many ways; I never lived in a ghetto (though I'm over seventy); I was brought up in Dublin [see "The Old Days in Dublin," by the writer in Commentary, July 1952—ed.] and also spent some time in London prior to my marriage. But after I married, my life, led on the Alaskan frontier, was far removed from Jewish contacts. Yet because of the traditional background in my formative years I often fell back on my Jewishness while on the frontier, and it helped in my pioneering. . . .

Well, keep on printing articles like the symposium. They will keep my blood stirred, and I'm sure I'll find it good for the digestion.

Jessie S. Bloom

Seattle, Washington

To the Editor of Commentary:

Your symposium deserves the highest praise for both its approach and the insight provided into the thinking of a group—nominally Jewish—who seem to be woefully devoid of positive feeling toward Jewish tradition or teaching.

Many of those who replied to your questions seem to stem from that segment of the Jewish community which—nurtured by much of the latter-day Jewish press—believed that the specific problems of the Jew would disappear in an egalitarian society. They ignore the golden chain of Jewish history which stretches over millenia. . . .

If the contributors to your symposium are possibly searching for a change in the values of society, why do they overlook the dynamic revolution taking place in Israel today? Although it is being accomplished with outside financial aid, this revolution is producing a new kind of Jew—one who is no longer chaff for the winds of fate, relegated to the class of middle-man or professional only, but one who builds on all levels, who tills the soil, constructs roads, and contributes to all strata of society. . . .

Hyman Epstein

Passaic, N.J.

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . . [Reading your symposium] I was reminded of the old Yiddish joke about the Jew who was elbowed off a Warsaw sidewalk by a drunken Pole: "Move, Jew!" To which our hero retorts, "I am no Jew. I am a product of Western civilization. Racially, I am a Sumerian-Babylonian-Egyptian—etc., etc." When he has done with his delineation, he explodes in mid-air and vanishes off the face of the earth.

Clara Wishener

Helmuth, N.Y.

Negroes & Negro Leadership

To the Editor of Commentary:

Julian Mayfield's "Challenge to Negro Leadership" in the April Commentary is another in the long list of essays which have seen in each disturbance in race relations a major repudiation, a major challenge, a major rejection, a major re-orientation, a ma-

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jor confrontation (at long last) of the true adversaries in the basic struggle, etc., etc. It is significant that few of these estimates are delivered by social scientists or other careful students, but by passing observers: novelists, essayists, hurry-up free-lance writers busy on a "hot" subject before it cools, and men and women in the theater and entertainment field.

With what must seem to him ample justification, derived from the experiences of himself and his near ones, practically any Negro considers himself an expert on the race question. Each, according to his background and his ambitions, has his solution for the race's ills. It would do them all good (including some diligent and devoted NAACP workers as well as most gin-and-tonic rug-sitting thinkers) to read a dozen books on the history of their struggle and another dozen on the nature of the opposition.

Going back only 70 years they would read again of Washington versus DuBois, of Garvey versus the NAACP, of the Communists versus the NAACP. The latter fascinating story, spreading across the 30's and into the 40's, is capped by the revelation, after Hitler attacked Russia, that the Communists will drop the Negro question as quickly as will any other political party when pressing it runs counter to their current major objectives.

Since 1930, in one fashion or another, the Communists have been predicting and working for the rise of the American Negro rank and file, the overthrow of the old leadership, the elevation of derring-do. They don't care a fig for Negro advancement; they have their eyes on an eruption against the American system.

They keep trying, but they have despaired of having the American working class lead this eruption. They still pin their hopes on the American Negro. The obstacle to those hopes within the Negro minority is made up of (a) the middle class, (b) the organizations the Communists call "reformist," i.e., the NAACP and all others who hold out hope of change and improvement under the American system, and (c) the Negro church.

Mr. Mayfield is, I am sure, an observer, not a political philosopher, and so it is only coincidence that he became enthralled with Robert Williams while they both were in Cuba lauding Fidel Castro; he might as easily have met him, perhaps, in Denver or Saginaw.

It is surely another coincidence that the targets rather clearly etched in the Mayfield piece are the Negro middle class and the Negro clergy. Even a *Fortune* magazine writer might have mentioned the Southern political and economic oligarchy and the reckoning day when the man nobody knows, the Negro rank-and-filer, arises to smash it, crushing as well (but of course!) the unctuous Negro middle class and the heaven-dreaming Negro clergy.

Negroes have been arming themselves since the slave revolts. The thing that is hailed as a new phenomenon in Monroe City, N. C., in 1960, is as old as the settlement here of blacks and whites.

The Williams story is a wonderful boost for the Williams ego; it is a wonderful alarm clock for writers determined to catch an editor's ear; it is a wonderful conversation piece for the knights and ladies of the wrinkled forehead; and it is a wonderful nursing nipple for those intent upon what is now yclept the socialist society. But it is not new and, unless all signs of the past are false, it threatens nothing except ennui.

ROY WILKINS
Executive Secretary
National Association for the
Advancement of Colored People
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was greatly surprised that COMMENTARY could be led so far astray by Julian Mayfield. . . . We know the nature of some of the broadcasts Mr. Williams has made from Cuba against the United States, which I am sure must have been available to Mr. Mayfield. My purpose, however, is not to question the propriety and decency of such activities. I leave that to his conscience.

When a group of white liberals in Charlotte first heard of Robert Williams and his activities in Monroe, . . . they immediately held out a hand of fellowship and cooperation. . . . But they soon had to withdraw their friendship, even before the NAACP found it necessary to suspend Williams. Dr. Raymond M. Wheeler of Charlotte and Harry Jones, N. C. Director of the Southern Regional Council, called on Mr. Williams, and they reported his statement, in effect: "The time has come to shed some blood." . . . Mr. Williams repeated the same sentence to Harry Golden to whose publishing office he came several times for assistance. Mr. Golden also cut off all relations with him. . . .

I was particularly interested in Mr. Mayfield's story about "the kissing case." Mr. Mayfield writes: "Without the pressure of world opinion, Williams insists, 'those boys would still be in custody.' "

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What an amazing piece of arrogance, and what a complete falsehood. Who ever heard of any sovereign state bowing under "pressure of world opinion," and particularly a Southern state? Has this ever happened before?

The NAACP had asked Harry Golden to intercede in this matter for the sake of the children who at that moment were not only in jail, but were being exploited by fund-raisers all over the North. Mr. Golden had a conference with Governor Luther H. Hodges (now Secretary of Commerce), and the Governor told him that if we could arrange suitable facilities for these two families in Charlotte and provide some initial support for each of the families, he would order them released. Golden talked with me over the telephone, and when I assured him that this would be done . . . , the Governor released the children the next morning.

The most amazing story yet to be written in the South is that of over twelve million Negroes, half of them semi-literate. . . . Their great victory lies in walking across India as Gandhi did—to the judge with a writ; and the judge says, "You have not yet exhausted all your avenues of relief within your state," and we say, "Yes, your Honor," and start all over again.

And nothing fills a man with so much pride that his life has been useful than the knowledge of participation in this great undertaking.

KELLY M. ALEXANDER
Chairman
North Carolina NAACP
Charlotte, N. C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Mayfield gives high praise to Robert Williams, who was disciplined by the NAACP two years ago for advocating armed resistance by Negroes to injustice in the South. . . .

Mr. Mayfield attributes to Robert Williams the statement that the "national government will only take action when it is made aware that individual Negroes are no longer facing the mobs in isolation but are acquiring the habit of coming to the aid of their menaced brothers." He then states that "this was precisely the position that the NAACP could not publicly support." . . .

The NAACP has . . . repeatedly given public legal support and defense to those who defended themselves against violent attacks. A famous example was the so-called Arkansas riot cases during World War I. . . . In the more recent Tennessee riot cases in Columbia, Tennessee, the NAACP again afforded successful legal defense to a large number of Negroes indicted for defending their homes against white mobs. . . .

Mr. Mayfield argues that "the situation in the South that provoked Williams's statement remains unchanged," referring to the statement about lynching and violence. But does it? In 1958, the NAACP Youth Council in Oklahoma City started sit-ins against lunch-counter discrimination and won. These sit-ins spread widely in 1960, backed by boycotts and picket lines organized by NAACP branches. . . . As a result, lunch counter discrimination has been ended in more than one hundred Southern cities.

The world famous bus boycott in Montgomery was ended successfully when the NAACP won a law suit which declared that bus segregation was unconstitutional. In North Carolina itself, Negroes are elected to city councils in a number of cities, and have successfully put students into the formerly segregated state university. . . . Negroes are voting in such significant numbers that they were the decisive factor in at least two Southern states, South Carolina and Texas, as well as in such Northern states as Illinois. . . .

There is a revolution in progress, even though the armed units advocated by Mr. Williams have practically nothing to do with it.

ALFRED BAKER LEWIS
Executive Director
National Businessmen Council—Affiliated with Americans for Democratic Action
New York City

MR. MAYFIELD *writes*:

My article maintained that leaders like Mr. Wilkins have lost their right to speak for Negroes because of their conservatism, timidity, and lack of vision. The vituperative, intemperate language of Mr. Wilkins's reply indicates he is in even greater trouble than I suggested. He seems unable to respond to a single question raised in the article; rather, he attempts refutation by character assassination.

Apparently any criticism of Mr. Wilkins is Communist-inspired. Laboriously he sets up red strawmen; then, valiantly, he slays them. It is a poor performance because it lacks pertinence. His red-baiting relies on generalization and innuendo. When Eugene Cook, attorney general of Georgia, set out to smear the NAACP by citing the alleged "subversive" leanings of some of its leaders, among them Roy Wilkins, he offered extensive "documentation." One regrets seeing

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the executive secretary of the NAACP resort to the shabby tactic of an avowed racist.

While I was preparing my article, it was suggested to me that some members of the national board of the NAACP believed that Williams was either a Communist, a tool of Communists, or the agent of a foreign power. No evidence was offered to support these views, and I therefore chose not to deal with them in the article. In the same sense of fairness I did not repeat the accusations Mr. Williams and others make against Roy Wilkins, nor will I now. My opinion is that Robert Williams's troubles stemmed from his political independence, his refusal to play the moderate game with the black leadership establishment.

Some will unkindly accuse Mr. Wilkins of an unjustified intellectual snobbery—and, indeed, he does seem to harbor contempt for anyone remotely connected with the arts—but I, for one, am impressed by his display of learning. I regret, however, that in the two dozen books he indicates he has read (books he seems to regard as unavailable to any but a privileged elite), he overlooks one work that would have helped him understand the nature of his difficulties: E. Franklin Frazier's *Black Bourgeoisie*.

Mr. Wilkins would have us believe that he is bored by the discussion, and this may be true. The ennui to which he refers apparently set in years ago. This would explain the lethargy that has often characterized his administration of the NAACP. (The organization should not be confused with the NAACP Legal, Education and Defense Fund, which is under different leadership.) Mr. Wilkins's vitriolic reply illustrates his belief that only he and a few other specialists have the right to an opinion on the direction of the Negro struggle.

Mr. Alexander offers as final evidence that Robert Williams is an undesirable character the testimony of Harry Golden and other Southern white liberals. This gives us more insight into Mr. Alexander than it does into Williams, and requires no further comment. Nor does his assertion that a sovereign state never bows under pressure of world opinion, and that he and Harry Golden were able to accomplish the freeing of the children in the "kissing case" with a couple of telephone calls.

What is disturbing is the astonishing pride Mr. Alexander takes in the inexhaustible patience with which he has borne oppression. I was concerned that these were his own views, and that they might in some way reflect the spirit of the young people he leads. I was, therefore, greatly relieved to discover that these thoughts—about walking across India and all of that—were first expressed, almost word for word, in Monroe in the spring of 1958 before the Unitarian Fellowship Conference by none other than Harry Golden.

Mr. Lewis mistakes change for fundamental progress. Of course desegregated lunch counters, buses, and schoolrooms are necessary steps forward. My point was that the winning of full citizenship, the ultimate objective of the Negroes, depends on their ability to fundamentally alter the Southern power structure, and that the intransigence of the white oligarchy will probably force them to abandon the technique of passive resistance, and employ more effective methods.

"Arms Control"

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was very much impressed and heartened by the article "The Strategy of Deterrence—A Dissenting Statement" by H. Stuart Hughes that appeared in your March issue.

This article, because it effectively makes the point that "arms control" is not disarmament, should be given the widest possible circulation.

Kenneth Metzner

Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Dealing with Pornography

To the Editor of Commentary:

I've been reading Commentary with great interest. . . . Perhaps I enjoyed Paul Goodman's article about censorship most of all ["Pornography, Art & Censorship," March], and it was amusing and delightful to see he feels that the Garden of Eden lies ahead, rather than behind us. . . .

Max White

New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

It seems odd to see Paul Goodman's thoughts on pornography published in a magazine like Commentary, which has some relationship to the Hebraic tradition. For his point of view appears based upon Freudian dogma; as he states, "when excellent human power is inhibited and condemned, it will reappear ugly and dangerous." On the other hand, the Hebraic, as well as the Christian, tradition is most concerned with individual inhibition.

Our current thinking has departed from

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the basic religious premise that human life is purposeful, thus implying an obligation to conform to standards of behavior which are not based on immediate, personal satisfactions. Today, we habitually justify the standards we prefer by demonstrating their pragmatic efficiency. To Paul Goodman, this change represents an "irreversible" revolution which he appears to welcome enthusiastically. But should we also rejoice in the replacement of the old tradition by the new permissiveness "where we do not know the best form of the family, the proper attitudes toward pre-marital, and extra-marital sex, nor even what physical behavior is normal," because of the happy prospect of facilitating "the moral and cultural structuring . . . that would also have beautiful cultural advantages"?

From the pragmatic viewpoint, the traditional attempt to confine sexual activity so that it would support the family structure has not demonstrably been shown to have failed. . . . From the aesthetic viewpoint, which appears dear to Goodman's heart, it is difficult to comprehend how public exhibition of the sexual act should be any more beautiful than the display of any of the other excretory functions the human body is capable of. . . .

Goodman has not shown why we should sacrifice our traditional moral attitudes in order to pledge allegiance to a system of thought whose sole justification is that it is revolutionary. For the issue that was raised in the printed article was more than the question of whether sexual activity is a matter of the most private personal intimacy, or a fit subject for public display. It was the matter of whether our traditional moral attitudes have a sound basis that can be rationally accepted, or whether they must be inevitably discarded because of the relentless grinding advance of the great revolution that must sweep away the primitive ugliness of our old ideas.

HAROLD KORETZ, M.D.

Avoca, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Let me state at once that while I regard censorship as both hateful in principle and unnecessary in operation, I regard the authors of "hard-core" pornography equally hateful and superfluous simply because they blaspheme and desecrate what's precious and lovely about people. (I do not, you see, agree with Mr. Goodman when he says "sex is a jolly subject." Whatever else sex may be—unifying, magical, ecstatic, dramatic, tragic, etc.—merely jolly it certainly ought never to be.) However, let the authors of pornography sell their productions openly, or, for all I care, perform them *gratis* in Central Park. . . . Then the rest of us could enjoy our love-making in a properly private atmosphere of eternal mystery, free of the infernal pressure to "make out," the double-entendre, the adolescent leer, and on and on.

JOHN ROCKWELL

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Goodman's impassioned plea for freedom of expression was engrossing. His own use of it—as in the mention of certain biological phenomena—attests to the sincerity of his convictions. His failure to recognize the inherent limitations such freedom entails must be credited to his enthusiasm.

One might object to his proposal to televise the sexual act on the grounds that this is unworkable. A goodly number of people, espousing different means of gratification, may demand equal time. . . .

I object simply on the grounds that not all of one's life is public property. Sexual intercourse is only one instance. The grief of the mother of an airplane victim is another, as is the process of elimination, to mention only non-violent examples.

There are other elements of life, less exciting no doubt, for which one can claim equal freedom of expression. Among these are ethics, taste, and the right to privacy.

Clearly, a compromise must be found.

ALFRED GUTMANN

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Paul Goodman quotes Justice Woolsey to the effect that *Ulysses* did "not tend to excite lustful thoughts. . . ." Mr. Goodman comments upon this judgment by saying, "Surely the author [Joyce] wants to say, 'It is lustful among other things. . . .'" In *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus (who supposedly represents Joyce himself) says, "the feelings excited by improper art are kinetic desire or loathing. . . . The arts which excite them, pornographical or didactic, are therefore improper arts." Surely this statement of Dedalus seems to indicate that Joyce would never have thought of *Ulysses* as "lustful" . . . although he must have realized that it might arouse desire through "a reflex action of the nerves" (*Portrait of the Artist*). . . .

LAUREL KAGAN

New York City

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To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . . What Goodman urges would not merely narrow the present definition of pornography, but would eliminate the definition from the court's rationale. This . . . is contrary to the keystone of English legal philosophy—*"state decisis,"* literally to abide by settled cases (or laws). When the court does function as a quasi-legislator, it does so by redefining previously applied law. . . .

The court's "way" may be ponderous and seemingly compromising to the "reasonable man". . . . [But] the important thing is that *Lady Chatterley* is accepted at all. Definitional cracks will be widened in each succeeding case. . . .

Lawrence Alan Brown

Ann Arbor, Michigan

To the Editor of Commentary:

Paul Goodman's essay appalls me. Under the cloak of a Freudian attack on censorship, he manages to plug for a more dangerous sort: "And suppose that . . . they [the courts] somehow strengthened the requirement of a provable social or human utility. . . . This decision would simply express our best present-day thinking. . . ." What requirement? If a pre-requisite for publication is to be "provable social or human utility," no freedom of the press could exist. . . .

Mr. Goodman arrives at this illiberal proposal by assuming that "moral problems are so publicly important that they must be ongoingly decided by the whole public; and they are so subtle that only the manifold mind of all the institutions of society . . . can figure them out and invent right solutions." In our society, however, institutions are the tools of the people, not their apotheosis, and cannot presume to judge moral values. . . . Mr. Goodman's thesis contains the social philosophy of a totalitarian society. . . .

Apparently, Mr. Goodman confuses society with the family and the court with the father. After a paragraph on *child-guidance* he immediately states: "If this is a correct analysis, then the recent 'liberal' decision on *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is inadequate. It is not permissive in the right way and it does not provide a firm moral and cultural support." . . .

But we are not the court's children, and we value freedom more than " 'structured permissiveness.' " . . . A happy family is a gem; if its delicate structure is inflated to the scale of society, it becomes that gross vulgarity: "Brave New World."

Morris F. Friedell

Chicago, Ill.

Mr. Goodman *writes:*

I am surprised that a medical man like Dr. Koretz should speak against organism self-regulation, as I suppose he does when he affirms "individual inhibition." My own thinking has not departed one bit from the premise that human life is purposeful; but goals are implicit in our natures and activities. Organic rhythms, reasoned habits, humane culture, achieved convictions, inherited loyalties give us a structure of behavior; none of these is an "immediate personal satisfaction" (but pleasure *is* a good *prima facie* sign that an activity suits and is healthful). I have a poor opinion of "standards of behavior," presumably imposed, that we "conform to," especially in vitally important matters beyond etiquette. Also, as a pragmatist I am impatient with the vulgar charge of "pragmatic efficiency." Efficiency for what? This is just the dreary teleology that James and Dewey *opposed*. Finally, surely Dr. Koretz cannot mean to say that *all* our traditional morals have a sound base. Some do, some don't.

I heartily agree with John Rockwell. Except that sex *is* a jolly subject—certainly not "merely." Witness his own letter.

Mr. Gutmann's letter helps me to make a useful distinction. Very precious indeed are individual solitude, lovers' being alone, friends' choice of company. But to demand "privacy" for any particular behavior, like sex, eating, or excretion, inevitably results in the distorted feeling that there is something in it to conceal; and it is surely the effect of a magical taboo or fear of the evil eye. I would suggest the following use of language: "One has the right to solitude, intimacy, non-interference. But it is indifferent what others see or know, whether one has privacy." I do not think that *any* of one's life is public property—the reporters should be slapped down. I also do not think that any physiological function need be concealed from a TV screen.

For Miss Kagan: My whole sentence was, "It is lustful among other things and therefore its net effect is tragic." The net effect is the aesthetic effect given by the whole combination; the tragic quality is given by the fact that our creaturely feelings *are* involved and *are* tranquillized. Joyce was a poor Thomistic Aristotelian, but he cannot have failed to understand this doctrine of the rousing of feelings and their catharsis.

For Mr. Brown: Far be it from me to regard the principle of the Common Law as "unreasonable." (As an anarchist I have always wanted to retain the Law and get rid of

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the State and the cops.) The accumulated wisdom of the decisions is often odd, but it is the best we have, it is at least concrete and pragmatic. This is why I posed my argument as a proposal to redefine the "obscene" and tried to hedge the calculated risk with so many safeguards. I cannot agree, however, that the "important thing" is that *Lady Chatterley* is accepted. In this psychological field—as with the segregation—the important thing is the warrant, the justification.

Mr. Friedall's interesting points I want to discuss in August, in replying to another correspondent. Let me here say merely that I oppose *all* censorship enforced by the state and the courts (counting "clear and present danger," etc. as not censorship); yet I could not live in a polity which did not ideally, with *all* its institutions, work to educate itself. That is, I refuse to believe there is no community. I am puzzled why a university, a church, or a high court cannot lead in moral judgment—I do not mean, enforce. My vague remark on "provable utility" was aimed explicitly at the TV networks, whose franchise I should dearly love to see rescinded, since they waste the public channels. I am here not speaking of censorship, but of a public privilege given for a public service.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to apologize to Judge Byran for an error in my criticism of him. At his level of the courts, he is obliged to rely on the principles enunciated higher up, and therefore Brennan on *Roth*. I have reason to believe that he would like to see a more liberal opinion.

Jewish Writing in England

To the Editor of Commentary:

Mr. Henry Popkin, in his sensible discussion of Jewish writers in England ["A Tradition Begins," February], seems to me to misconstrue the characterization of Fagin in the musical *Oliver!*

Oliver! is a disturbing phenomenon. What Mr. Popkin rightly terms its "air of immorality" is not the cynicism which is exploited for purposes of radical social comment—found in a number of English plays and musicals derived from the Brecht-Weill prototype—but the cynicism of a commercial ethos. . . . As played by Ron Moody, Fagin has become a contemporary *goniff* with a beard and homosexual mannerisms, an anachronistic mixture of shady tycoon, miserly recluse, and psychopathological criminal. He remains an exploiter of starving children, a grotesque parody of a capitalist entrepreneur—and a Jew. He is supposed to be lovable which, in contemporary jargon, means that he is not to be condemned. Bill Sykes, on the other hand, is the Christian villian: he is a . . . less admirable outlaw than Fagin because he is less clever. Sykes is killed and Fagin escapes miraculously.

The widespread approval of this undistinguished projection of Jewish anxieties suggests an audience that is either dull or callous. That many Jews find in this entertainment a comforting allegory of their own social position is deeply disheartening, for what emerges from *Oliver!* is a compound of complacent sentimentality and crude anti-Christianity. It should be a great success in New York.

Paul Breslow

London, England

To the Editor of Commentary:

I saw Lionel Bart's *Oliver!* Henry Popkin writes, "if he [Fagin] is more explicitly Jewish than the Alec Guinness portrayal in the film of Oliver Twist, he is less villanous, . . . promising us once more that he will turn over a new leaf." Actually Fagin's refrain or theme song is, "Can I change?" By his chanting of this Jewish question, we know that he can't.

As the curtain goes up, we see him with his bent back to us—sullen and crafty in a long caftan, and when he faces us there are the side curls, beard, nose, eyes—all under a broad-brimmed, black hat. . . . If this grotesque caricature were the creation of a Gentile, the Jewish community would be in an uproar, but since Lionel Bart, and Ron Moody are both Jews, it is taken as an amiable joke. . . .

The real Fagin is always revealed when he is alone. His musical horseplay, his apparent humanity, his capering with the children are but the cloak of ruse to make them more amenable to his abuse of their fair English innocence. When Oliver complains about a sausage, Fagin replies, "What if it's mouldy, it's kosher." Since Georgia Brown, the young Jewish leading lady, told me that this line was not in the original script but had been put in by Moody to get an extra laugh, I telephoned Bart. He said that he had been waiting for a complaint about the line, and he would speak to the producer and have it removed. The line was not taken out for at least two months after our conversation. Perhaps by that time some honest butcher or housewife had dared to be offended despite the endearing review in the *Jewish Chronicle*. . . .

Samuel Menashe

New York City

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To the Editor of Commentary:

Henry Popkin's criticism of *Limits of Love* by Frederic Raphael was rather inept. . . .

Mr. Popkin states it is an "attenuated novel of conventional Jewish life [of] three sisters . . .; one marries a reactionary would-be assimilationist."

Actually, the "reactionary . . . assimilationist" is the brother of Julia and Ruth. This difference is quite important to characterization and family background.

If Mr. Popkin can misconstrue basic facts, how well-founded is his criticism?

Irwin Katz

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Popkin *writes:*

First, on *The Limits of Love.* I prefer my own phrasing to Mr. Katz's odd abbreviation of it. I say the novel "arranges three sisters in significant order," and, in the interest of compression, I use the term "sisters" to include two sisters and a sister-in-law. If my use of the word "sisters" is questionable—I am not sure it is—Mr. Katz goes me one better by inventing a character named "Ruth." Shall we apply Mr. Katz's doctrine and assume that nothing he says about the novel is of any interest?

Second, on *Oliver!* With regard to Mr. Menashe's factual concerns: I have just heard Fagin's last song on the original-cast record of *Oliver!* He begins, "Can somebody change? It's possible," and he concludes, "I'll turn a new leaf over and who can tell what I may find?" Of course, I do not say that he changes; I say only that he promises to. Another matter: I have a different recollection of the exchange over the sausages. The participants are surely Fagin and the other kids; Oliver enters a moment later to be introduced by the Artful Dodger. And, as I recall, the complaint is that the sausages are "stale," not "mouldy." Neither word is complimentary, but "stale" is less offensive. If the line is Moody's improvisation, perhaps he altered it from one night to another.

Two issues remain: attitudes toward Fagin and the meaning of the characterization. I was in France when *Oliver!* opened, and I was then following the British weeklies more faithfully than the dailies. I do not recall that any reviewers, including those Jewish in origin or liberal in persuasion, found Fagin offensive. I have met several British theater people, mainly writers and mainly Jewish; in many conversations about the theater, not one of them complained of Ron Moody's Fagin. The only objection I have heard came from an American. Perhaps our long, unofficial ban on dialect comedy, now lifted, has created the notion that Jewish comedy is bad for the Jews.

In examining this Fagin, I think both Messrs. Menashe and Breslow have neglected the dramatic context. Who is the "exploiter of starving children," Fagin or Mr. Bumble? Oliver lives a miserable existence with such ogres as Bumble and Sowerby, who represent respectable life. Then he joins the happy children who invite him to consider himself one of them. . . . The main choice is between the respectable Bumble and the rascally Fagin. *Oliver!* endorses lovable rascality and thus allies itself with the amorality of, for example, *Make Me an Offer.*

A Correction

To the Editor of Commentary:

Because my reply to Bennett Berger [June] had to be cut, I would like to correct a distortion caused by several omissions.

Dr. Berger concluded that automobile workers such as those he studied "can and do spend eight hours a day at apparently meaningless work . . . and apparently survive OK." I asserted that this conclusion is an inadequate response to the industrial problem, and for support, quoted Harvey Swados's testimony after working alongside automobile workers for a year: "the one unifying force among all these men, so different from one another in ethnic background, educational attainment, and personal ambition, was hatred of their work . . . among men on the assembly line there was a near unanimity of contempt for what they did and a shame at their inability to earn their livings in a better way." I then asked whether we can accept Dr. Berger's consoling reassurance that such men "survive OK" or that they have achieved what he calls "satisfaction and contentment."

I argued further that if Dr. Berger can emerge from a comprehensive study of his automobile workers' "new style of life" with the startling admission that "he does not really know" whether or not their jobs are inherently meaningless, then he has been asking the wrong questions. These jobs, I pointed out, are dirty, monotonous, noisy, physically exhausting, and—most important—devoid of almost any element that could contribute to the human sustenance or growth of the men who do them.

Ronald Gross

New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

EDUCATING IN AMERICA

THE SCHOOLS. By MARTIN MAYER. *Harper. 446 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG

MARTIN MAYER'S *The Schools* is the best book about education I have ever read. This is rather an embarrassing admission for a professor of education, who has necessarily read a great many books in his own field; yet I make this assessment on detached, professional grounds, judging Mr. Mayer's work as a piece of scholarship on a specialized subject. While the general standard of American educational writing is not high, it is not as low as popularly supposed. The mode is undoubtedly *la mode de Caen;* but as usual, half is above average, and the best is very good. *The Schools* is better than that.

Embodied in the text are exceptionally clear and precise discussions of the history of education, learning theory, and evaluation—that is, tests and measurements and their relationship to the purposes of education. The entire book provides a tight analysis of how a curriculum is constructed and discusses it within a context of comparative education, telling exactly what is done in classrooms from California to Finland with the particular materials appropriate to every level of instruction. Most astonishing of all is Mr. Mayer's preoccupation with the distinct epistemological character of different subjects, which he quite rightly maintains to be a crucial issue in their presentation, however elementary. When he discusses the teaching of arithmetic, or of a foreign language, Mr. Mayer immediately answers the question of what mathematics, or communication, is, and why, therefore, the procedures used to teach either are almost certain to fail in some ways and to succeed in others. Again, when he discusses "social studies," he first makes clear what it is—usually a big nothing—then argues why it almost has to be.

On this point I am in sharp disagreement with Mr. Mayer and for reasons that I believe challenge him on a basic element of values; but I will return to this difference after noting a few more of *The Schools'* extraordinary qualities. Exceedingly comprehensive, it maintains the same level of competence in each of the many areas it discusses (departments of education treat them as the bases of specialized careers); and it includes one of the best and clearest discussions of teaching methods to be found anywhere, illustrated by examples of resourceful, dedicated classroom teaching that are indeed exceptional. The construction is masterly, alternating throughout passages of lucid theoretical or historical analysis with vivid and well-selected examples drawn from specific classrooms. The book is also a pleasure to read, terse and humorous—not witty, perhaps, but still sharp: "From fourth grade on," Mr. Mayer writes, "the readers have the form of anthologies with the individual pieces 'altered' the way one alters a tomcat." When one finishes this book, he will have a rather profound, detailed, and well-organized understanding of American public education. He will also know enough about British, French, and Danish public education to have a pretty clear idea of both the actual alternatives and the limits set by the always formidable nature of the enterprise.

But I hope he will not agree with Mr. Mayer as to what these limits are. *The Schools* has already been hailed as an unusually even-tempered, well-balanced presentation of a topic that usually provokes acrimonious and ill-informed special pleading. So it is, and perhaps the more effective for that: scolding is a poor educational technique. But Mr. Mayer, though never bland, is too calm for me. Much American education is outrageous; so many of his examples are outrageous, and it seems to me perfectly realistic to be outraged by them. Mr. Mayer does a superb job of showing why the public schools are as bad as they sometimes are,

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and why one is likely to be disappointed if he expects them to be better. But to explain is not to justify: *"tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner"*? No. Not at all.

"Willy-nilly," Mr. Mayer says, "all schools must work from the basis of Emile Durkheim's rather grim definition: 'Education consists of a methodical socialization of the young generation' "; and while ours is a pluralistic society, Mr. Mayer argues, the schools are dominated by and transmit a narrowly selected range of social values. "American schools are always going to promote middle-class values, because the national community they serve is overwhelmingly middle-class in orientation and even in 'self-image.' It is more than a little unrealistic to expect teachers who are fighting hard for recognition as 'professionals' to cultivate in their classrooms the values of an unprofessional sub-group in their community." Much of Mr. Mayer's reiterated argument is directed against the view that the school can or should transcend the values of the community. Only the individual himself—if he has the guts and the inclination—can undertake that. "School is not really the place for questioning authority—somebody has to be marking those exams, and the marker has to be right. The highly-charged words of the culture—'democracy,' 'Communism,' 'love,' 'prejudice' and so forth—cannot be seriously analyzed in school." The school is the agent of society and to expect it to be anything else is to expect too much. "Beginning with the fourth grade, the books are full of buncombe, but it is the kind of patriotic buncombe that children like and schools must provide." Or, finally: "By the time the child finishes sixth grade . . . he will have acquired an almost complete stock of 'common-sense' knowledge about the world around him—knowledge that is mostly false, but serviceable enough in the adult world." It is hard to understand, then, how—in a society from which the horse has all but vanished—the school gets its material. Mayer examines alternative sources in detail; and he shows very clearly why most textbooks are stupefying, and many teachers are petty, timid, and vulgar-minded.*

I agree, of course, that the schools are middle class: they have to be, as Mayer says, if they are to make the children run on time. But it still matters that this should be true. The difficulty is not that the schools have a middle-class bias, but that the middle class—and especially the lower middle class, from which, Mayer tells us, most teachers come—provides a peculiarly unpleasant model for human life. It is what being middle class does to the potentially free, spontaneous mind and heart that matters, as the author of *Madison Avenue, USA* knows.

From Mayer's reasoning, it is clear that *all* U. S. public agencies are and must be dominated by the values of the society they serve; and it is just this domination that at certain times becomes intolerable. Basically what is wrong with the schools is, I suspect, identical with what is wrong with the Central Intelligence Agency, another very middle-class organization: both have become and are functioning as agencies of self-delusion. They perpetuate reassuring folk-myths, while the total society depends on their functioning in the service of—well, intelligence. It is not relevant to say that the schools (or the CIA) cannot be much better than their society; they have a specialized function to perform in that society. Durkheim's "grim definition" does not limit the school to the uncritical transmission of anxiety-free social residues, and any society that permits the "methodical socialization of the young generation" on so limited a basis runs a grave risk of falling within the scope of Durkheim's more widely known—and even grimmer—masterwork on suicide.

But Mayer accepts these limits, echoing Carlyle's familiar crow of triumph over Margaret Fuller's finally accepting the universe; though Margaret Fuller, it seems to me, had a lot better chance than we do of getting delivery of it intact. Improving disgracefully low efficiency to perform more effectively the job that society actually expects and will support, with the kind of personnel actually available—this, the book implies, is really the schools' business. And to this end Mayer makes many valuable and practical suggestions. But he is then logically

* He does leave out of his account, however, even though some of his illustrations mildly suggest this point, the small but impressive and growing body of literature that reveals how often teachers are also compulsive, controlling, and punitive, with no love to lose on any youngster. Cf. Egon G. Guba, Phillip W. Jackson, and Charles Bidwell, "Occupational Choice and the Teaching Career," *Educational Research Bull.*, 38, 1, 1959.

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obliged to discuss education problems largely in terms of improved teaching methods.

An earlier reviewer—I think in the *Times*—particularly approved of this passage:

> There are a million and a quarter classroom teachers, and by the normal curve of distribution most of them are not especially talented. It was observed some years ago that most steelworkers are not especially talented, either—but they all turn out pretty good steel. The steel industry has developed a technology that enables routine operatives to perform satisfactory work. The schools appear to be trapped in a technology that can be employed successfully only by good teachers.

It seems to me that the most obvious inference to be drawn from this illuminating analogy is that we need more good teachers. But if we cannot get them, I am not sure the analogy helps much. Teaching youngsters really isn't much like making steel—I am willing to grant an exception in the case of the educative experience shared by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—and essential as good technique is, I don't think education is basically a technological problem. It is a problem of drawing out of each youngster the best he has to give and of helping him to see the world he is involved in clearly enough to become himself—among other people—in it, while teaching him the skills he will need in the process. This is a custom operation, not for the assembly line; and Mr. Mayer has not shown, or tried to show, that any series of technical improvements can supplant it, though they may certainly facilitate it. Instead, he has come very close to showing that public education in a democracy is impossible. But, as the best of his illustrations reveal, the schools do not know it and teach anyway.

JUDGING ISRAEL

ISRAEL: A BLESSING AND A CURSE. By HEDLEY V. COOKE. *Stevens & Sons, Ltd. 308 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ

JUST AS ISRAEL often feels it must justify its existence in the international community, so some of its supporters still examine their consciences to reassure themselves about Israel's title to sovereignty. This is what Hedley Cooke has done. His book is a sort of moral accounting of the plus and minus factors involved in Israel's creation and growth, from which he concludes that Israel is entitled to exist: "It is a tolerably good nation, with higher standards (even in actual practice) than the average."

This conclusion would be objectionably patronizing if not for the fact that it comes after a painfully personal search by Mr. Cooke for the "truth" in the jungle of Israeli and Arab propaganda. After being appointed American consul in Jerusalem in 1943, Mr. Cooke found himself growing violently pro-Jewish and abnormally sensitive to any form of anti-Semitism. It was only after he left the foreign service in 1946 that he began to question his own emotional involvement in the issues and to understand how philo- as well as anti-Semitism had profoundly affected the Israel-Arab controversy. Later he spent three and a half years in Israel, re-exploring the country as well as his former feelings and viewpoint. Though he has now tried to arrive at an unprejudiced summary of the moral grounds of Israel's position, his book is still an intensely personal one, alternately knowledgeable and perceptive, and misinformed, and obtuse.

Mr. Cooke's search for morality in Israel's position is both appealing and relevant. For no matter how much Israel's citizens and partisans insist that it is a nation like other nations (that is, entitled to its share of cynicism, cruelty, and immorality), Israel is not like other nations. It stands for conscience. Its creation was an expression of the world community's moral obligation, an international gesture of contrition. As the symbol and surviving reality of persecution throughout the ages, and as the bearer of a religion with a great ethical tradition, its people were expected to build a state where hatred and prejudice would wither away and where justice would be tempered with mercy. Its treatment of minorities would, naturally, be exemplary. Perhaps I have exaggerated these expectations, but the fact remains that the world community has set higher moral standards for Israel than for any other country except perhaps India—thanks to Gandhi.

Cooke, too, expected much from Israel, and was naturally disappointed. Were his

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expectations, then, too exalted or his disappointments too profound? I think not. I still cling to the notion that Jews have a particular moral duty toward the strangers who dwell among them. Even exponents of *realpolitik* continue to give lip-service to Deuteronomy 10:19 ("love ye therefore the stranger; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt"), though they scarcely observe its spirit. If Israel is to be a Jewish state in more than merely a biological sense, then it is obliged to preserve Jewish morality. That this morality developed, in part, from the political powerlessness of the past has prejudiced many against it today; however, one cannot justify the cult of Joshua ben-Nun if it leads to the massacres of Deir Yasin, Kibya, and Kafr Kassem.

These massacres were state policy. They were criminal by any standard of national behavior, but particularly so because Jews perpetrated them. Perhaps most shameful was the response of the Jews outside Israel. There were a few outcries from Ihud and Ihud-types; but mainly there was a shamefaced silence. (To be sure, outrage was expressed by the American Council for Judaism and the *Jewish Newsletter,* but their attacks on Israel are unrelenting anyway.) After the Sinai war, public opinion in Israel forced a formal inquiry into the Kafr Kassem massacre, and Judge Moshe Landau ruled against the plea of following orders.

Cooke feels that the trial, the wave of revulsion that followed, as well as the cynical view among many Israelis that massacres don't win them friends abroad, will all serve as future deterrents. Otherwise, he is quite satisfied with the way Israel treats its Arab minority and finds many redeeming features even where Arabs suffer hardships, like seizures of non-refugee Arab property for security considerations or military government regulations. As for the Arab refugees, he feels that Israel must acknowledge the right of the refugees to return and ought to accept 200,000. He believes that Israel can absorb that many as the crucial first step in the solution of the refugee problem. He reasons as follows: There are 900,000 refugees. If Israel takes 200,000, and if one then deducts another 100,000 who will stay where they are because they have jobs there, that leaves only 600,000. Then, 200,000 would "in all likelihood" become citizens of Jordan. Then, the other Arab countries would be "impelled" to take the remaining 400,000.

COOKE'S REASONING makes Menachem Mendel, Sholem Aleichem's classical *luftmentsh,* appear as a hard-headed realist; but perhaps all he is really saying is that the Arab refugee problem, given the good will of both parties, is soluble. He is not so sure about the bigger problem he finds in the symbiotic relations between Israel and world Jewry and their potentially unwholesome ramifications. He is disturbed that Jews outside Israel care about Israel and that Jews all over the world maintain supranational ties. The time is past, he says, when a person's race, religion, and nationality are all bound together. In an effort to find a definition for what, in his eyes, is outmoded and anomalous, Cooke calls this feeling of Jewish interdependence "tribalism." I prefer the word "peoplehood." I think Cooke means precisely the same thing, but he is baffled by its existence and persistence. It is unique; no other people has survived two thousand years in world dispersion. Cooke would like to think of Jews as adherents of the Jewish faith, and the additional dimension of Jewishness confuses him, since it eludes definition and comparison. Jews stick together, hence there is tribalism. Unable to cope with the persistent Jewish desire to perpetuate the Jewish people, Cooke puts the blame on the ideology of Zionism. In so doing he fails to see that Zionism is a consequence, not a cause, of that force he has chosen to call tribalism.

The word "tribalism" is curious. Its pejorative meaning has been popularized by the American Council for Judaism, which uses it to describe a condition considered primitive and uncivilized, parochial and provincial, instead of modern, cultured, broad, and universal. But it is hard to find anything attractive or morally elevating in denying affection and support to those we feel close to, whether by religion, culture, language, history, or tradition. Nor is any positive value to be gained from denying or denigrating that relationship, however attenuated it becomes.

James Baldwin, in criticizing the film *Porgy and Bess,** said that no white man

* "On Catfish Row," COMMENTARY, September 1959.

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could direct Negro actors because he could not understand the Negro situation. My first reaction was resentment—but Baldwin was right. How can whites know what it is like to be inside a black skin in America? So, too, there are aspects to being Jewish that Cooke, for all his good will, cannot grasp and about which it is presumptuous of him to lecture Jews.

Cooke's objections to Israel's exploitation of the symbiosis, particularly in America, are more to the point. Though he mistakes the one-dimensional, public-relations position for the three-dimensional reality, he is right when he says that Israel exaggerates its accomplishments, with the result that many Jews believe that the only factories in the Middle East are in Tel Aviv and that the desalination of sea water is an Israeli invention. He is right about Histadrut, an industrial giant and a mammoth employer, that puts on its trade-union hat when it goes fund-raising abroad among workers. It is also reasonably true to say that a kind of self-imposed censorship exists among most American Jews: don't criticize Israel *publicly,* because it will hurt Israel and it will hurt the fund-raising business. The professional fund raisers among American Jews have helped to create an atmosphere in which the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto becomes something to be exploited for the raising of money. The Israelis cannot be absolved of all responsibility for the license and vulgarity of the fund raisers, but Cooke should also blame a community that allows fund raisers to set its moral tone.

Cooke takes up the further question of lobbying on behalf of Israel and the matter of dual loyalty. When he asks if there isn't a smugness in the response of American Jews that their country permits mutiple loyalties on various levels, he fails to recognize that the apparent smugness serves only to conceal anxiety. Often Jews feel awkward about their intense lobbying, but so long as the Arabs refuse to accept Israel's existence, everything becomes a matter of life or death: military assistance, economic aid, a friendly political gesture. If the Arabs can ever be induced to recognize Israel, the clamor of American Jewish lobbyists will surely decline.

Cooke concludes with a Polonius-like lecture to Israel: be good, be honest, be kind, be modest. This would be unobjectionable if not for the fact that he points to the "moral power" of such small countries as Austria and Switzerland as models for Israel. But what do Dollfuss, Schuschnigg, and the Anschluss say about Austria's morality? And what of Switzerland's close-fisted wartime and postwar refugee policy, or its role as broker for the Nazis to dispose of plundered European wealth and treasures? Also, if these countries have achieved the kind of morality that Cooke admires, I wonder how he can continue to think in terms of the Deuteronomic blessing or curse from which his book takes its title, and conclude that the people of Israel have all that it takes for the blessing, not the curse.

THE AMERICAN ENGLISHMAN

A MIRROR FOR ANGLO-SAXONS. By MARTIN GREEN. *Harper. 178 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by JOHN GROSS

ENGLAND IS A highly class-conscious country, English culture is predominantly middle-class in flavor, the nastier kind of English snob is usually also anti-American in the bargain. These are not, one would have thought, among Nature's most closely guarded secrets, and in proclaiming them at the top of his voice Martin Green has the air of a man stopping strangers in the street to tell them that the sun is going to rise tomorrow morning. Still, at the outset one sympathizes with his criticisms, particularly at a time when so many of the old myths are dead but stolidly refuse to lie down. Reluctantly compelled to enter the 20th century backwards, the English produce a botch like the rebuilding of central London; a hybrid educational system results in a situation where careers are only half-open to the talents. Hence Mr. Green's discontent with the ideal of the gentleman as not only an injustice but also an anachronism.

Stifled in England, Mr. Green breathes freely in America. "Glamor" would not be my word for the specifically American quality which he finds lacking in Britain, but I know what he means. In his rage against the attitudes of *The Quiet American* he omits to mention that from the Bryces and

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Brogans down to the half-mile queues for the latest Elvis Presley film, most Englishmen have been receptive rather than hostile to American culture, and he has oddly little to say about what it is that attracts him in America: he knows we have a lot to learn but won't say what, and vague references to such things as the "natural healthy humanity" of John Wayne are really not quite enough. But for all that, his instincts are sound, and he has something important to say. Why, then, has he produced such a shoddy piece of work?

For a start, he deals exclusively in stereotypes, he is destructive without counting the cost, and he is not above rigging the evidence. Why, for example, quote from the conservative *Sunday Times* on a subject likely to show it at its worst—the downfall of Glubb Pasha—in order to illustrate the character of the British press, without even referring to its rival, the equally influential and far more liberal *Observer?* No one could fairly expect the generalizations in this kind of polemical writing to be watertight, but Mr. Green's leak like a sieve. There is no hint of how intricate the class structure of British society really is, how complex were the historical forces which have shaped it, or how rapidly it is being modified. Instead, one caricature confronts another: the English Gentleman, "as celebrated by John Buchan" (a Scotsman, incidentally), and the Decent Man, tough, working-class, usually from the north. Empire-builders and lah-di-dah aesthetes are bundled together in Mr. Green's demonology, but he nowhere mentions the middle-middle class from whom the Conservatives draw most of their support, and who would feel at least as hostile to the values of, say, a Hampstead salon as Mr. Green's blunt northerner (who is "always"—*sic*—"a proletarian": tell that to the Yorkshire marines). Mr. Green, whose concrete suggestions amount in the end to little more than the novel suggestion of a change of heart, cheerfully ignores politics, which is perhaps just as well, in view of the confidence which his last-minute excursions into potted history and international relations inspire.

He leaves out so much, indeed, that after a time one has an oppressive sense of fantasy, of wandering through a dream landscape in which barren plains are littered with everyday objects distorted almost out of recognition. But he has two limitations which seem to me more crippling than that. The cultural Francophilia which he pillories ("arty" is a favorite term of abuse) is a minor affectation compared with his own truly terrifying provincialism, his monumental lack of interest in events outside the Anglo-Saxon world, his incuriosity, his boredom with the past. Allied to this is an intolerance and narrow-mindedness which is not only unpleasant in itself but blinds him to the most important virtues of the society against which he rails. One hates to be forced back on such a splendid-chaps line of defense, but still, first things first: never to have come near to succumbing to totalitarianism from right or left in 20th-century Europe, seems to me too notable an achievement to take for granted. Better live in a country where people snub one another than where they kill one another.

Luckily, however, we are faced with no such drastic choice. Where then shall we look for signs of health in our sick society, and who shall guide us out of the wilderness? Mr. Green advances the claims of four men: D. H. Lawrence, George Orwell, F. R. Leavis, and Kingsley Amis. One of these has been dead for ten years, and another for thirty; they are all literary men with—to put it mildly—marked idiosyncrasies. (Why no scientists, philosophers, historians, or even other kinds of artists—where would Henry Moore or Benjamin Britten fit in on Mr. Green's map, I wonder?) It is as though an American were to be told that his salvation lies in following the collective wisdom of Ezra Pound, Thorstein Veblen, Yvor Winters, and Peter de Vries. And though they undeniably share certain qualities, chiefly negative, in common, Mr. Green's band of musketeers are hardly one for all and all for one; it would be nice to hear each of them talking about the other three—and about Mr. Green.

Not only does Mr. Green persist in treating his heroes as though they were a compact group of the same generation; he has nothing fresh to say about their achievements, let alone their defects. For he really *is* a hero-worshipper, whether he is being starry-eyed about Holden Caulfield, giving free publicity hand-outs for Gracie Fields

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("the greatest British entertainer of our time"), or deriving "immense encouragement" from the career of Ernest Bevin. He can discuss Orwell without referring to Communism, and Lawrence without referring to romanticism: it's being anti-posh that counts. And when I read that "Tickets, Please" (a Lawrence story in which a group of girl tramcar conductors belabor a philandering inspector called John Thomas with their belts) demonstrates that "there are many ways of being British, deeply exciting and admirable ones," or that F. R. Leavis is "supremely an open and flexible mind"—well, I rub my eyes and wonder whether the mirror which Mr. Green is holding up for Anglo-Saxons is not merely tarnished but, so to speak, positively cracked.

For there is much in this book which is downright farcical: Mr. Green's enthusiasm for barracks-room obscenities, for instance, or his account of a meeting with Dr. Leavis which prompts an outburst of gaudy writing worthy of a romantic novelette. I shall content myself with quoting briefly from one of Mr. Green's most remarkable passages, his portrait of the essential Englishman;

> He is small, neat, quick-moving, with a fresh-colored, neat-featured, unemphatic face, without physical stateliness, wheeling a bicycle, carelessly dressed, open-necked, plain-mannered, shrewd, skeptical, friendly-jeering in tone . . . jealous of his masculinity, a family man, essentially private, needing and creating around him the atmosphere of decency, kindliness, cleanliness. . . .

This paragon is meant to suggest both Lucky Jim and Lady Chatterley's gamekeeper, but I think that if "knobbly knees" were substituted for the "friendly-jeering . . . tone," one would have a pretty fair sketch of the essential scoutmaster.

But if *A Mirror for Anglo-Saxons* invites ridicule, it also provokes alarm—not in itself, but because it fits in so well with the current mood of many English intellectuals, the peculiar blend of pedantry, amateur sociologizing, and little-English radicalism at its least rewarding which was to be seen in the recent stampede to praise the puritan virtues of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Mr. Green, who in spite of having read Tolstoy can't see what is wrong in Lawrence's treatment of Sir Clifford Chatterley, is more fashionable than he realizes; I shall be surprised if the English edition of his book doesn't enjoy a fair measure of success.

One can't be cross with Mr. Green himself for very long—he is altogether too half-baked, too muddled, too vulnerable. And although he has his peevish moments, he is less rancorous than many of his contemporaries. But what he represents is another matter. If this profoundly silly book bears witness to a cultural crisis or failure of nerve in England today, it is as a symptom and not as a diagnosis.

RACE AND HOUSING

PROPERTY VALUES AND RACE. By LUIGI LAURENTI. *256 pp.*

THE DEMAND FOR HOUSING IN RACIALLY MIXED AREAS. By CHESTER RAPKIN and WILLIAM G. GRIGSBY. *177 pp.*

PRIVATELY DEVELOPED INTERRACIAL HOUSING. By EUNICE and GEORGE GRIER. *264 pp.*

STUDIES IN HOUSING AND MINORITY GROUPS. Edited by NATHAN GLAZER and DAVIS MCENTIRE. *228 pp.*

RESIDENCE AND RACE. By DAVIS MCENTIRE. *409 pp.*

Each volume $6.00. University of California Press.

Reviewed by ARNOLD M. ROSE

THESE FIVE BOOKS comprise a most remarkable contribution to applied social science. Published for the Commission on Race and Housing, their high technical quality compares favorably with any study done in the social sciences, and, indeed, with most studies done in the natural sciences. Their conclusions provide definitive answers to current questions concerning the housing needs of minorities, the adequacy of the housing available to them, the effects of a Negro "invasion" upon a neighborhood, and so on. At the same time, however, these conclusions are not derived from or related to any general theories in sociology; no claim is made that the conclusions have any applicability to other societies, or even to our own society in the future. I would argue, in fact, that they can have no more than an antiquarian interest twenty, perhaps even ten, years from now. In this lies the main fault of the set;

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it makes a contribution to knowledge, but it does not make a contribution to science—a considerably more practical criticism than might, at first, appear.

In *Property Values and Race,* Luigi Laurenti answers the question: "Do real estate prices fall when non-whites settle in a previously all-white neighborhood?" Laurenti meticulously gathered data from three different cities on the sale and rental prices of homes and apartments within twenty neighborhoods entered by non-whites between 1945 and 1955. He did the same for thirty-four control neighborhoods which remained all white during the same period. He then compared any price shifts before and after non-white entrance in the changing neighborhood with any price shifts in the control neighborhoods. Thus the study provides as "beautiful" an example of "field experiment" as has ever been employed in the social sciences. By classifying his test neighborhoods according to percentage of non-white population, Laurenti shows that his statistical conclusions apply whatever the size of non-white influx: in short, "test areas in all ranges of non-white occupancy manifested both superior and inferior price performance as compared with control areas, but in every category, the majority of significant differences favored the test areas." Examining all previous studies (done in other cities), Laurenti shows that they reach the same conclusions. There is, then, no factual basis for the belief that non-white entry into previously all-white neighborhoods produces a fall in property values; what results is a diversity of price outcomes according to circumstances, and such entry is more often associated either with price improvement or stability than with a price decline.

So research has laid another popular myth to rest. But will these careful studies convince those who *now* believe otherwise? That is, the findings are applicable to the postwar period of general housing shortage during which the unprecedented Negro demand for housing (generated by Negro population movements and rise in income) expressed itself. But can they also be considered true of 1961, when these particular pressures have eased? Moreover, couldn't the same results have been just as easily deduced from simple economic theory? (In fact, they have been so deduced by Gunnar Myrdal and several others.) Why should a capable social scientist, spending so much money and effort, bother to do such a time-limited and culture-limited study?

Rapkin and Grigsby's *The Demand for Housing in Racially Mixed Areas* goes behind price movements to examine the demand for housing in areas undergoing racial transition. Four Philadelphia neighborhoods in which Negroes occupied 20–30 per cent of the dwelling units were analyzed completely for 1955. Two had good housing, two had poor; one in each pair was undergoing a rapid, the other a slow, transition. The main findings are:

(1) More than one-fifth of the home buyers were whites—indicating that whites *will* buy in areas which Negroes have entered and where the proportion of Negroes is growing.

(2) Practically all the Negroes (and 90 per cent of the whites) depend on mortgage financing. Mortgage lenders often take a dubious view of racially mixed areas, but in Philadelphia, financing was liberal and played a key role in sustaining demand and prices.

(3) Negroes and whites received about the same value for their housing dollar, paying substantially the same prices for similar houses.

(4) The white purchasers had no unusual characteristics or motivations which distinguished them from the resident white population in the areas into which they bought—thus exploding the myth that whites who voluntarily live near Negroes must be peculiar. They did not even express attitudes of unusual tolerance, although negative sentiments were rare; only 4 per cent of the residents voiced strong disapproval of Negro residence in the neighborhood. Thirty-one per cent, however, were strongly negative about having Negro neighbors next door.

In short, the Rapkin-Grigsby study provides statistically documented case studies of successful residential race mixing. Unfortunately, the fact that this study is limited to Philadelphia during 1955—to a city which happened to have an efficient, enlightened city government—imposes upon it a time-space limitation even more stringent than that of the Laurenti volume.

The investigation by George and Eunice

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Grier, *Privately Developed Interracial Housing,* has, in a sense, the same subject as Rapkin and Grigsby's but places it within a broader context. The Griers scoured the country to find examples of new, privately developed housing projects that truly mixed white and non-white purchasers or renters. They found 50 of them, totalling some 8,000 units, located mainly in the Middle Atlantic and West Coast states, and practically all built since 1950 (the study stopped in 1955, and 21 of the 50 projects began construction in 1954 and 1955, so that most of the experience with private mixed housing is very recent). They discovered that practically every builder had faced serious problems—in selecting and acquiring land, obtaining sufficient financing, and recruiting occupants—not usually experienced by those who build projects intended for only one race. "In part at least," the Griers write, "these problems seem to stem from the fact that people—residents of the area surrounding the site, government officials, lenders, and prospective occupants—fear that difficulties will arise in . . . the experience of the development *after* occupancy. Paradoxically, that . . . phase is the one in which this study has found the fewest problems." This is the chief conclusion of *Privately Developed Interracial Housing,* but in documenting it the Griers provide amazing insight into the difficulties American society places in the way of new, planned, interracial housing. One comes away with the feeling that the situation studied by Rapkin and Grigsby—unplanned movement into already available housing—will provide the major means, at least for a while, by which areas of mixed housing will develop in our society.

Still, the Griers's study does demonstrate that new housing developments for an interracial clientele can be marketed under widely varying circumstances. The rapidity with which a project is filled (predominantly with whites, it is true) largely depends upon its management and promotion, the intrinsic suitability of the homes, the population of the surrounding area (it should not be overwhelmingly Negro), and the nature of the white market (it should consist largely of newcomers and temporary residents). Moreover, no distinctive characteristics single out residents of the interracial projects; they are not generally crusaders for racial equality. The Griers's penetrating study, even though it lacks the methodological "neatness" of the other two, also illuminates the opportunities and weaknesses of "reform" groups, the interplay of economic motives and racial prejudice, and several other aspects of our culture. But once again, the authors do not fully draw out all the general sociological implications of their findings.

THE VOLUME EDITED by Nathan Glazer and Davis McEntire, *Studies in Housing and Minority Groups,* consists of seven independent reports, which include a comparison of Negro housing in relatively liberal Atlanta and relatively illiberal Birmingham (by Robert Thompson, Hylan Lewis, and Davis McEntire); a description of the housing of Mexican Americans and Negroes in San Antonio and Houston (by Jack E. Dodson); of Negroes in New Orleans and the Miami area (by Forest LaViolette and Elizabeth Virrick, respectively); of Puerto Ricans in New York City (by Morris Eagle); and of Japanese Americans in the San Francisco Bay area (by Harry Kitano); and, finally, an analysis of a Detroit middle-class neighborhood now changing from white to Negro occupancy (by Albert Mayer). All these studies show the interplay of factors which create minority housing problems: poverty, prejudice, differing cultural backgrounds and values, and the economic interests of builders, financiers, agents, and residents.

In his introduction, Nathan Glazer tries to draw some general conclusions from the welter of local facts—that is, he tries to save something of all this research for "basic science." The effort is a laudable one, even if one disagrees with some of the results. For example, Glazer says that "prejudice in its pure form . . . rarely plays a decisive role in the determination of the housing of minority groups," and, "in the North the relatively small role of pure prejudice is even more striking" than in the South. The decisive factors in the former are "Negro economic weakness and white middle-class fears of the deterioration of neighborhoods on Negro entry."

But what does Glazer suppose "pure prejudice" to be if it does not include such unjustified and unsupported "fears"? Prejudice is *always* rationalized, either consciously or unconsciously: no man has a prejudice with-

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out a "reason." It is only when the "reason" is proved false without destroying the antipathy that we know we are dealing with prejudice. Actually, these studies reveal that minority housing problems are created in the North by more things than the two factors Glazer mentions. There is the white man's fear that he will lose status if he has Negro neighbors; his belief that most Negroes are violent and irresponsible, that they would create a bad environment for his children; and there is his sense of being overwhelmed in a "black sea"—to mention only a few. And all these, even though some are partly grounded in fact, are facets of prejudice. In any case, the source materials with which Glazer is working (not to speak of the other studies McEntire brings together in his summary volume), do not demonstrate that the decisive factor in inadequate segregated housing for Negroes is their low economic status. Sometimes adequate housing is found in segregated areas; furthermore, economic status is tied up with other factors. (As a matter of fact, Glazer himself in effect drastically modifies his conclusion in another of his generalizations.)

McEntire's *Residence and Race* not only summarizes the first four volumes, but brings to this summary a wealth of additional information on population, economic status, urban residence patterns, the housing market and housing industry, court decisions, and government housing programs. In general, it describes the patterns and extent of discrimination in housing throughout the United States, and notes the general reduction in discrimination. But it is impossible to summarize the wealth of information and analysis contained in this 400-page volume. Suffice it to say that McEntire has produced a definitive study of all facets of housing for minority groups. It can provide guidance for the government administrator, private housing developer, or real estate promoter who wants to be more effective in providing more or better housing for minority groups.

Nevertheless, the volume does not pose the problems it investigates or the hypotheses it proposes in such a way as to make them yield a contribution to a cumulative body of general knowledge. McEntire quite properly often cautions the reader that since the conditions described can change, and indeed are likely to change, many of the book's conclusions will soon be dated. It is not at all difficult to imagine the changed conditions which would antiquate this research. To use an example I have already suggested, if the general housing shortage decreases and the pent-up Negro demand for housing is eased, a number of Negroes moving into a neighborhood—other conditions remaining the same—might very well cause a decrease in housing values; the whites could readily move away, and Negro demand would not be sufficient to sustain the price level.

The nearest that McEntire, or his collaborators, comes to a generalized statement is a casual remark like the following: "An increasing proportion of Negroes in a mixed area is reflected in a shrinkage of white demand, but the behavior of white buyers seems to be related more to the anticipated than to the actual proportion of Negroes." But this generalization arises rather haphazardly out of a purely empirical procedure. There was no effort to derive it from, or relate it to, a general theory of expectations or to one concerning the perceptions of minorities. Nor does McEntire relate this perfectly good (and fascinating) finding to any of the generalizations he makes at the end of *Residence and Race*. The latter are either the empirical results of other studies, or are obvious platitudes (e.g. housing segregation can be changed by changing the actions of those who make the decisions on housing). In their adherence to a very narrow conception of "applied social research," McEntire and his colleagues have missed some of their best opportunities to arrive at findings that might have a practical value well beyond 1960 or 1965.

THE WAGES OF "MATURITY"

REVOLUTIONARY ROAD. By RICHARD YATES. *Atlantic-Little Brown. 337 pp. $4.75.*

Reviewed by THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

JUDGING FROM ALL one reads and hears, there seem to be as many writers tramping around the suburbs these days as there are postmen: for every man carrying in the news, another is sending it out. Since *Revolutionary Road* is one of the more interesting American novels that has appeared in some time, one might expect it to contain

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some arresting inversions of its material. But the truth is that its major figure, Frank Wheeler, is still another bright young man who has lost the way and ended up in a New York corporation, where, limp with boredom, he pushes sales correspondence around on his desk. He spends his weekends attempting to build a stone walk or trying to hold his troubled marriage together or lapsing into a mild alcoholic haze. His wife April is still another handsome but frustrated woman—an ex-drama student who is begining to lose her hold. Their two young children are equally familiar; so are almost all of the minor characters, the nondescript house in Connecticut, the office tedium, the suburban anomie. The dust-jacket tells us that Richard Yates spent five years working on this, his first, novel, and since he is a writer of intelligence and imagination, I suspect that he spent a good part of the time asking himself if he could really bring off a book burdened by so much banal typicality. That he has been able to do so is a tribute not only to his talent but to his feeling for the material, to his power—at times, almost obsessive—of identifying with the world of Frank Wheeler. The result is a book that carries the reader along by the very fact of its being so literal and intimate and intensely American. I have a number of quarrels with *Revolutionary Road,* but have only admiration for the way its author has turned flat, worked-over material into an arrestingly relevant novel.

What makes the book as good as it is, is mainly Yates's ability to tell the truth—both about the little, summary moments of work and marriage today and—though less clearly—about the larger social issues which the behavior and fate of the Wheelers represent. Passage after passage has the simple, unmistakable ring of authenticity: Frank's sinking feeling as he returns to his desk on Monday morning, his writhing with self-irony as he nods deferentially at an important executive's vulgarities, his different poses in order to look masculine or "interesting." Yates has the novelist's natural instinct for the nuances by which people give themselves away; he can render Frank's glib denunciations of the illusions and the sentimentalities of American life as unerringly as he catches Frank demonstrating them. The fights between Frank and April, the long earnest "talks" in which nothing of their real feelings gets communicated, the network of dependency and egotism, guilt and self-righteousness, supportiveness and betrayal, in which the young couple is trapped—all of this Yates catches with remarkable aptness.

THE BROADER RAMIFICATIONS have much the same immediate truth. Early in the novel, the Wheelers are driving home from an amateur theatrical in which April, along with the rest of the cast, has flopped dismally. Frank consoles himself with the thought: "It simply wasn't worth feeling bad about. Intelligent, thinking people could take things like this in their stride, just as they took the larger absurdities of deadly dull jobs in the city and deadly dull homes in the suburbs . . . the important thing was to keep from being contaminated. The important thing, always, was to remember who you were."

Much of the story that follows is patient documentation of the contradiction here that Frank tries to live by—one of his characteristics that makes him representative. A nagging concern with one's "identity" lands most of the young "thinking" people today in the same boat, just as it has become one of the leading themes of postwar fiction: the critical need to locate a self that is independent of one's daily circumstances. But once one subtracts the effects on the personality of an unsatisfying job and home life—subtracts, that is, all but a few hours of life out of each week—the identity that remains becomes painfully abstract and problematic. So Frank and April both learn—and with disastrous consequences. Frank is also typical of many members of his generation in having to go back seven years to his student days at Columbia to remember who he is, for it was there that he had his last, as well as his first, chance to develop.

The leading fact about Frank is, in a sense, his typicality, for he is made of the promising but unstable human stuff that the culture shapes according to its dominant values. At Columbia he rebels against his middle-class family; he is the World War II veteran, still wound up from his experience, alertly stalking ideas and girls in the streets of Greenwich Village. However, all the while, he is merely enacting the vague

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tribute the educated middle class pays to intellect and independence; for all real purposes, his rebellion is over by the time he is twenty-three. After graduation, he has married and his wife has gotten pregnant; now bent on behaving "maturely," so that she will carry the baby, he takes a job at Knox Business Machines. The important thing about the job is that it is dull and undemanding; in that way, he can preserve his "own identity" until he has enough money to go to Europe. But under the familiar banner of "maturity," the process has now begun by which the Village rebel will turn into a solid consumer and the uncommitted student of the humanities will eventually become a committed salesman of the new computers.

Seven years later he is still with Knox, still doing "the mature thing" by owning a home in the suburbs, and still trying to preserve his identity as one of the thinking, intelligent people. But there is "a faint, chronic fever of bewilderment in his eyes," his "thinking" is confined largely to self-projections about the sickness and emptiness of American life, and his intelligence is employed mainly in analyzing and manipulating his wife. Now and then he looks sadly at his impressive collection of books "which were supposed to have made all the difference but hadn't." When his wife offers him the chance to "find himself" while she supports them in Europe, he is more threatened than pleased; the years at Knox have taken their toll and he sees himself in Paris "hunched in an egg-stained bathrobe, on an unmade bed, picking his nose." What he has really come to want is the more prestigious job that is offered at Knox.

OVER THE WHOLE NOVEL broods this sense of incompleteness and attrition, of landscape that has become commercialized without losing its rawness, of young couples whose best possibilities are already years behind them, who have had to rely too much on their marriages, who work at life—as April sees in her moment of truth near the very end—in a way that is "earnest and sloppy and full of pretension and all wrong." "Maturity," "love," "morality," "self-identity"—these are the catchwords of the Wheelers, and, as has been pointed out in recent years, of their World War II generation. But as the novel argues convincingly, these words stand less for viable values than they do for excuses and evasions of failure. With each of these words as a justification, Frank manipulates April to give up the idea of Europe and carry their third child, and then uses the same slogans to detach himself from her predicament in order to concentrate on his new role as a rising young executive. Eventually he makes it to shore as a successful, if completely hollowed-out, huckster of the Madison Avenue vintage. Meanwhile April has given up, has tried too late to abort the baby, and died.

Who is to blame—Frank? April? the failure of both their parents to raise them adequately? the *Zeitgeist?* modern American life? All of these are implicated in the disaster of the Wheelers, and there is at first glance a satisfying complexity in the moral vision with which Yates distributes the blame. However, it is just here that the novel betrays a certain equivocation and patness of conception that blurs its meaning and dissipates its power. The commentary on the times, both implicitly and explicitly, tries to go beyond the Wheelers' smug criticism of America's "drugged and dying culture." Every so often the son of the competent and awful Mrs. Givings emerges from the state mental hospital to tell the truth about everyone and everything; but his comments on the "hopeless emptiness" of the times are hardly more substantial or illuminating than what we have been hearing from Frank. Most of the explicit social criticism explains too much or too little: its indictment is amorphous and merely irritable, and compromises the powerful commentary implicit in the details.

At the same time, the psychology of the novel has a way of letting the air out of whatever large social protest is being made. Embedded in the narrative are a number of flashbacks that explain why Frank and April behave as they do—why he has problems with masculinity and why she is crippled as a wife and mother. The stress on their supposedly determinative childhoods undercuts the other issues being raised, for in making his tragedy neatly probable, Yates is saying in effect that the Wheelers probably would have failed under the best of circumstances. To write a more meaningful novel about the deadening effects of modern work and

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marriage, Yates needed characters who could have put up considerably more resistance. As is, Frank and April retain their social significance only to the extent that their early deprivations are typical. And the larger cultural point is obscured: the white-collar man today has a tough time with the problem of masculinity whether or not his father was as overbearingly virile as Frank Wheeler's; nor do the April Wheelers need to grow up without their parents in order to have serious trouble relating their lives to the demands of their husbands and children. Further, the neat consistency with which the Wheelers' behavior is shown to betray their emotional problems, the ease with which they are seen through, weakens considerably the impact of their tragedy. Psychology, as Raskolnikov discovered, is a two-edged knife: depended upon too schematically in a novel, it leads the reader to begin to play the same game as the novelist, and it is easy to end up thinking—if only April had found a good psychiatrist in time.

In the end, *Revolutionary Road* is too obsessive and portentous a novel, too laden with personal meanings of all sorts placed on the frame of a slender and overly simplified story. But it is also an extremely *conscious* book, and Yates's ability to see so much in his material, to bring out so much of the truth that lies behind the clichés about suburbia and the organization man is more important finally than his partial failure to dramatize his characters and ideas effectively. One of his ideas seems particularly interesting. Frank Wheeler is a son of sturdy, hard-working middle-class stock; for all his joking about it, he follows his father's example of working for Knox and eventually becomes a highly attenuated and slick version of him. April is a daughter of the reckless "golden people" of the 1920's, cherishing the memory of their glamour and freedom and, in her way, she becomes a coarsened, joyless version of the former aristocracy. In other words, the attrition that marks their life together lies along a greater curve of decline in American life—a thinning out of class vitalities from generation to generation, an ever-diminishing legacy from the national dream of combining hardiness and grace. The revolution invoked by the title has several possible references, but the main point is that its spirit in America is nearing the end of the road.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG teaches education and social science at Brooklyn College. He contributed "Truth: Upper, Middle and Lower" to our December 1960 issue.

LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ, a frequent contributor, works in the Library of Jewish Information of the American Jewish Committee.

JOHN GROSS is a young English critic. This is his first appearance in COMMENTARY.

ARNOLD M. ROSE, professor of sociology at Minnesota, is an authority on race relations.

THEODORE SOLOTAROFF is an associate editor of COMMENTARY.

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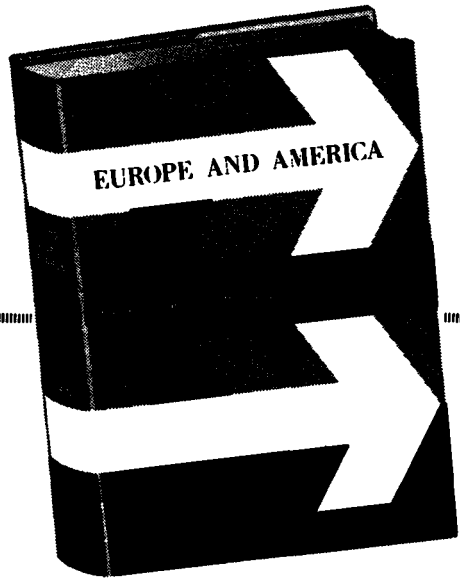

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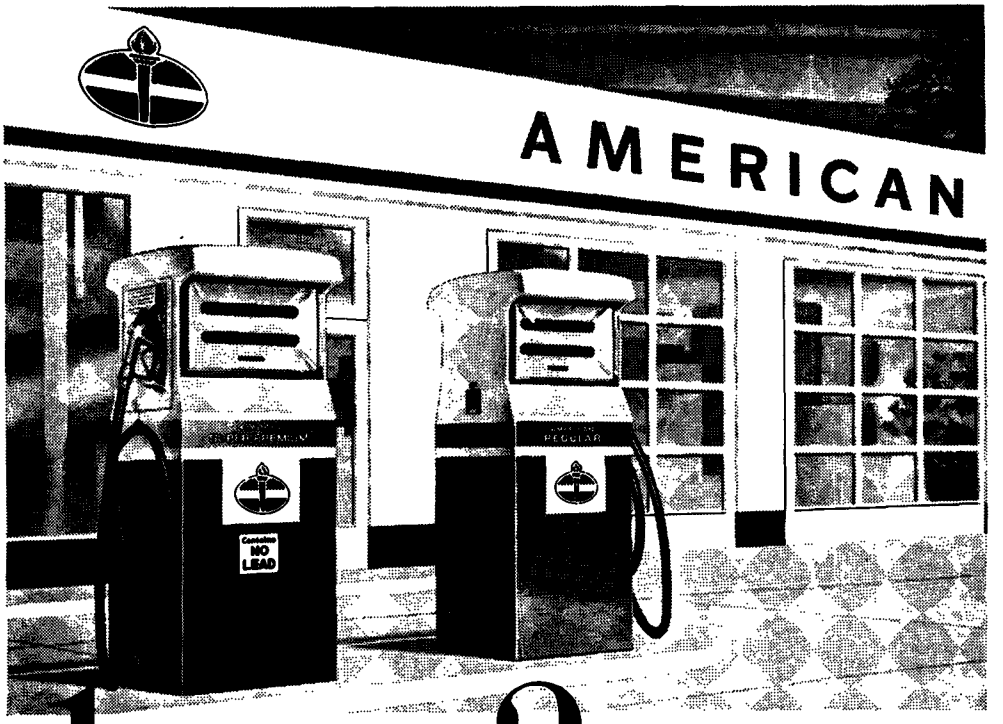

1 • New unleaded AMOCO® Super-Premium for knock-free performance!

2 • Ever-improving facilities bring you brighter, better, newer service stations!

New stations, brighter stations set the stage for AMOCO Super-Premium, newest achievement of American Oil Research. AMOCO Super-Premium is up in knock-free performance . . . yet it *contains no lead*, burns clear and clean to give spark plugs, valves and mufflers longer life. Yes, *the difference in gasolines is crystal clear*. So, come in and fill up with new AMOCO Super-Premium. It's in the blue pump at the sparkling station that proudly displays the red, white and blue sign—"AMERICAN."

AMOCO AMERICAN

You expect more from American...and you get it— *that's the American Way!*

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